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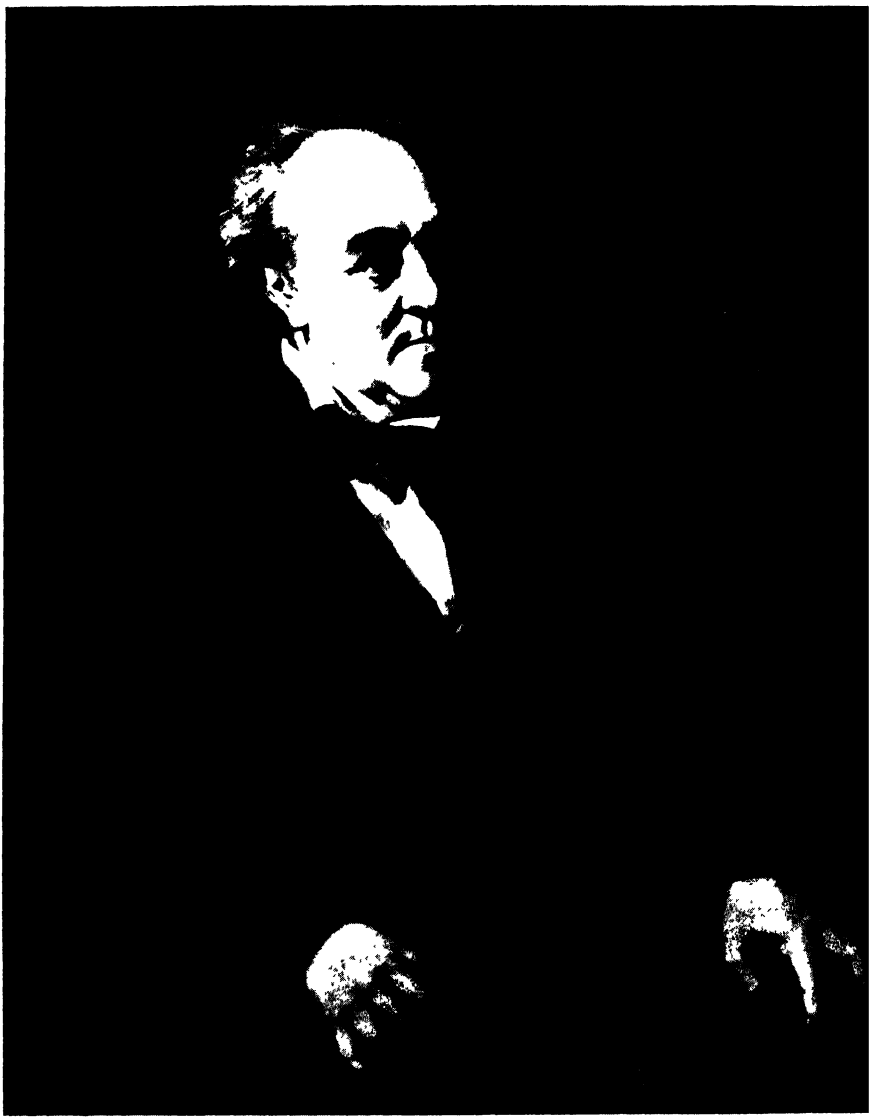
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SAVAGE LANDOR

By the Same Author

OLD GODS FALLING
DE QUINCEY (Great Lives)
VICTORIAN WALLFLOWERS
THACKERAY: A Personality
CHARLES READE: A Biography



WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR, AGED 63

Painted by William Fisher at Bath, 1838

SAVAGE LANDOR

By

MALCOLM ELWIN

NEW YORK
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
1941

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To Dorothy

North Stoke, 1938.
Lynton, 1940.

CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTORY. BOYTHORN OF *Bleak House* xi

CHAPTER

I. THE REBEL IN THE MAKING 1

Parents and family–Brothers–Home and childhood–An unruly and brilliant boy–The rebel at Rugby–Growth of arrogance–Removed from Rugby–The delight or despair of his elders–The crammer of Ashbourne–The "mad Jacobin" of Oxford–Lampoons the dons–Escapade with a gun–Rustication and quarrel with his father.

II. THE YOUTH OF BRILLIANT PROMISE 29

Tenby and Nancy Jones–Lodgings in London–Dorothy Lyttelton–First *Poems* published–Flight to Swansea–An illegitimate child–Refusal to enter a profession–Meets Alfieri–Living with Nancy–Rose Aylmer–Writes *Gebir*–Friendship with Dr. Parr–Writing for newspapers–On the fringe of politics–Violence and restlessness–Tom Paine and Talma–Anna Seward snubbed–Bertie Greatheed and Serjeant Rough–Southey on *Gebir*–Minor poetry–Mocatta the Jew.

III. THE REGENCY BUCK 69

Mistresses–His brother Robert–Paris in 1802–View of Napoleon–Political disillusion–More poetry–Fashionable life at Bath–Lady Belmore and Bess Caldwell–Passion for "Ianthe"–An unhappy romance–Love poetry in *Simonidea*–Death of his father–Pursuit of Ianthe–Sells estates to buy Llanthony Abbey–Friendship with Southey–A volunteer in the Spanish war–Colonel Landor of the Spanish army.

IV. MARRIAGE 104

Southey's advice–Political writings–*Guy's Porridge Pot* and *The Dun Cow*–*Count Julian*–In search of a wife–Philosophy of marriage–Marries a pretty face.

CHAPTER PAGE

V. SQUIRE BOYTHORN OF LLANTHONY 122

The Vale of Llanthony—Grandiose plans—The lawyer Gabell—Charles Betham arrives—*Commentary on Fox*—War with tenants—Unconventional behaviour of a grand juror—A magistracy refused—The affair of Tombes of Trodrumon—Baker Gabb succeeds Gabell—The prey of local vultures—Quarrel with Betham—Harassed by crafty attorneys—Hiding from creditors—Writes the *Letters of Calvus*—Financial straits—Sued for libel—Driven into exile—The rights of the Betham case.

VI. FIRST YEARS OF EXILE 168

In Jersey—Separation from his wife—Flight to Tours—The Hundred Days—Rejoined by his wife—Brother Robert abroad—Settles at Como—A suspected spy on the Princess of Wales—Life at Como—Southey's visit—Birth of a son—Expelled from Como—At Pisa and Pistoia—Latin poetry—Correspondence with Wordsworth—Queen Caroline's misconduct—A second child—Settles at Florence—Trouble with the British minister—Friendships with Francis Hare, Seymour Kirkup, and Armitage Brown—Meets Leigh Hunt—Brush with Byron—Germ of *Imaginary Conversations.*

VII. FLORENCE AND FAME 200

The *Imaginary Conversations*—Refused by five publishers—Julius Hare his agent—Negotiations with John Taylor—The question of libel—The book's reception—Quarrel with Taylor—Leaves Palazzo Medici for Villa Castiglione—Collecting pictures—Delight in his children—Lord Dillon—Hazlitt's visit—Trip to Rome—Lady Blessington on Landor—The Blessington Circus—Visit to Naples—Defence of Lady Blessington.

VIII. FIESOLE AND ENGLISH VISIT 240

More *Imaginary Conversations*—Colburn the publisher—Letters to his mother and sisters—Threatened expulsion from Florence—Joseph Ablett—Buys the Villa Gherardescha at Fiesole—His mother's death—Financial affairs—Ianthe re-enters his life—John Ken-

CHAPTER PAGE

yon and Crabb Robinson–*Poems* of 1831–A duel averted–Visit to England–Ianthe at Brighton–Llanbedr–Meeting with Wordsworth–Visits Lamb, Coleridge, and Lady Blessington.

IX. DOMESTIC BREACH 264

With Arndt and Schlegel at Bonn–Return to Fiesole –William Sandford and G. P. R. James–Visits of Emerson and Monckton Milnes–Domestic habits– Bulwer Lytton and N. P. Willis–*Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare*–Lady Blessington as literary agent–Fads in orthography–Rose Aylmer's sister–Wreck of his married life–Bones of contention–Ianthe and Lord Wenlock–Mrs. Landor's lover–The final breach.

X. THE LION IN HIS PRIME 287

Pericles and Aspasia–G. P. R. James as agent–The lion in London–Meets John Forster–The first night of *Ion*–Elizabeth Barrett–Wordsworth's treachery– *A Satire on Satirists*–Exit Wordsworth–*Letters of a Conservative*–Immense literary fertility–Forster and the *Examiner*–Attempts at family reunion–Visit to Heidelberg–Financial arrangements–Julia's frustrated romance–An outcast from his family.

XI. LONDON AND BATH 316

At Clifton–The Eltons–Charities–St. James's Square –Sir William Napier–Lady Bulwer's malice–The Paynters–Friendship with Dickens–Southey's illness –The original Pecksniff–Gore House–Views on literary fame–Reviewers–Poetic dramas–Friendship with Browning–Political faith–Attack on Brougham –Disdains political preferment–Burdett and Macaulay –Prince Louis Napoleon.

XII. FAMILY AFFAIRS 346

At the Opera–Giving away pictures–The art connoisseur–Paris in 1841–Walter in England–The surviving sister–The Rector of Colton–Brother Robert's writings–Henry the business man–The undutiful Arnold–Julia's visit–A lonely old man.

CHAPTER PAGE

XIII. THE BOYTHORN DICKENS KNEW 365

Fads and oddities—Summer travels—Browning's affection—New friends and old—Julius Hare—Landor's charm—The dog Pomero—Moves lodgings—*Collected Works* published—Latin poetry—Habit of work—De Quincey's criticism—Exaggerated sensitiveness—Triumph of the *Hellenics*—Interest in foreign politics—The year of revolutions—Support of Kossuth—Advocates *Tyrannicide*—The Crimean War.

XIV. OLD AGE AND SCANDAL 394

Generosity to his juniors—Carlyle at Rivers Street—Mrs. Andrew Crosse—Julia's French count—Brother Henry's prudence—Young Augustus Hare—Eliza Lynn—Father and daughter—Eccentric temper—Ianthe's death—Old friends gone—Last summer visits—Elizabeth's death—Continued fertility—*Imaginary Conversations of Greeks and Romans*—Attacks on Popery—*Last Fruit Off an Old Tree*—Pomero's death—The Hon. Mrs. Yescombe—Libellous pamphlets—Makes his will—Forster's mistake—*Dry Sticks* published—Libel suit—Farewell to England.

XV. LAST EXILE 429

The Yescombe verdict—Pecksniffs pleased—Fiesole again—Unnatural sons—Browning to the rescue—The Storys at Siena—Lodgings at Florence—Breach with Forster—Holyoake the agitator—Politics and poetry—Kate Field—Garibaldi's cause—Last of the Brownings—Digging his grave—Arthur Walker—Last writings—Edward Twisleton and Algernon Swinburne—A rebel to the last.

APPENDICES 469

I. Landor's Life at a Glance: Summary of Events.
II. Bibliographical List of Authorities.
III. List of Landor's Publications.

INDEX 485

INTRODUCTORY

BOYTHORN OF *Bleak House*

"I went to school with this fellow, Lawrence Boythorn," said Mr. Jarndyce, tapping the letter as he laid it on the table, "more than five-and-forty years ago. He was then the most impetuous boy in the world, and he is now the most impetuous man. He was then the loudest boy in the world, and he is now the loudest man. He was then the heartiest and sturdiest boy in the world, and he is now the heartiest and sturdiest man. He is a tremendous fellow."

"In stature, sir!" asked Richard.

"Pretty well, Rick, in that respect," said Mr. Jarndyce; "being some ten years older than I, and a couple of inches taller, with his head thrown back like an old soldier, his stalwart chest squared, his hands like a clean blacksmith's, and his lungs!—there's no simile for his lungs. Talking, laughing, or snoring, they make the beams of the house shake. . . . But it's the inside of the man, the warm heart of the man, the passion of the man, the fresh blood of the man, Rick . . . that I speak of. . . . His language is as sounding as his voice. He is always in extremes; perpetually in the superlative degree. In his condemnation he is all ferocity. You might suppose him to be an Ogre, from what he says; and I believe he has the reputation of one with some people. There! I tell you no more of him beforehand. You must not be surprised to see him take me under his protection; for he has never forgotten that I was a low boy at school, and that our friendship began in his knocking two of my head tyrant's teeth out (he says six) before breakfast. Boythorn and his man" to me "will be here this afternoon, my dear."

I took care that the necessary preparations were made for Mr. Boythorn's reception, and we looked forward to his arrival with some curiosity. The afternoon wore away, however, and he did not appear. The dinner-hour arrived, and still he did not appear. The dinner was put back an hour, and we were sitting round the fire with no light but the blaze, when the hall-door suddenly burst

open, and the hall resounded with these words, uttered with the greatest vehemence and in a stentorian tone:

"We have been misdirected, Jarndyce, by a most abandoned ruffian, who told us to take the turning to the right instead of to the left. He is the most intolerable scoundrel on the face of the earth. His father must have been a most consummate villain, ever to have such a son. I would have had that fellow shot without the least remorse!"

"Did he do it on purpose?" Mr. Jarndyce inquired.

"I have not the slightest doubt that the scoundrel has passed his whole existence in misdirecting travellers!" returned the other. "By my soul, I thought him the worst-looking dog I had ever beheld, when he was telling me to take the turning to the right. And yet I stood before that fellow face to face, and didn't knock his brains out!"

"Teeth, you mean?" said Mr. Jarndyce.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Mr. Lawrence Boythorn, really making the whole house vibrate. "What, you have not forgotten it yet! Ha, ha, ha!— And that was another most consummate vagabond! By my soul, the countenance of that fellow, when he was a boy, was the blackest image of perfidy, cowardice, and cruelty ever set up as a scarecrow in a field of scoundrels. If I were to meet that most unparalleled despot in the streets to-morrow, I would fell him like a rotten tree!"

"I have no doubt of it," said Mr. Jarndyce. "Now, will you come up-stairs?"

"By my soul, Jarndyce," returned his guest, who seemed to refer to his watch, "if you had been married, I would have turned back at the garden-gate, and gone away to the remotest summits of the Himalaya Mountains, sooner than I would have presented myself at this unseasonable hour."

"Not quite so far, I hope?" said Mr. Jarndyce.

"By my life and honour, yes!" cried the visitor. "I wouldn't be guilty of the audacious insolence of keeping a lady of the house waiting all this time, for any earthly consideration. I would infinitely rather destroy myself—infinitely rather!"

Talking thus, they went up-stairs; and presently we heard him in his bedroom thundering "Ha, ha, ha!" and again "Ha, ha, ha!" until the flattest echo in the neighbourhood seemed to catch the contagion, and to laugh as enjoyingly as he did, or as we did when we heard him laugh.

We all conceived a prepossession in his favour; for there was a

sterling quality in this laugh, and in his vigorous healthy voice, and in the roundness and fulness with which he uttered every word he spoke, and in the very fury of his superlatives, which seemed to go off like blank cannons and hurt nothing. But we were hardly prepared to have it so confirmed by his appearance, when Mr. Jarndyce presented him. He was not only a very handsome old gentleman—upright and stalwart as he had been described to us—with a massive grey head, a fine composure of face when silent, a figure that might have become corpulent but for his being so continually in earnest that he gave it no rest, and a chin that might have subsided into a double chin but for the vehement emphasis in which it was constantly required to assist; but he was such a true gentleman in his manner, so chivalrously polite, his face was lighted by a smile of so much sweetness and tenderness, and it seemed so plain that he had nothing to hide, but showed himself exactly as he was—incapable (as Richard said) of anything on a limited scale, and firing away with those blank great guns, because he carried no small arms whatever—that really I could not help looking at him with equal pleasure as he sat at dinner, whether he smilingly conversed with Ada and me, or was led by Mr. Jarndyce into some great volley of superlatives, or threw up his head like a bloodhound, and gave out that tremendous Ha, ha, ha!

"You have brought your bird with you, I suppose?" said Mr. Jarndyce.

"By Heaven, he is the most astonishing bird in Europe!" replied the other. "He *is* the most wonderful creature! I wouldn't take ten thousand guineas for that bird. I have left an annuity for his sole support, in case he should outlive me. He is, in sense and attachment, a phenomenon. And his father before him was one of the most astonishing birds that ever lived!"

The subject of this laudation was a very little canary, who was so tame that he was brought down by Mr. Boythorn's man, on his forefinger, and, after taking a gentle flight round the room, alighted on his master's head. To hear Mr. Boythorn presently expressing the most implacable and passionate sentiments, with this fragile mite of a creature quietly perched on his forehead, was to have a good illustration of his character, I thought.

"By my soul, Jarndyce," he said, very gently holding up a bit of bread to the canary to peck at, "if I were in your place, I would seize every Master in Chancery by the throat to-morrow morning, and shake him until his money rolled out of his pockets, and his bones rattled in his skin. I would have a settlement out of some-

body, by fair means or by foul. If you would empower me to do it, I would do it for you with the greatest satisfaction!" (All this time the very small canary was eating out of his hand.)...

"There never was such an infernal cauldron as that Chancery, on the face of the earth!" said Mr. Boythorn. "Nothing but a mine below it on a busy day in term time, with all its records, rules, and precedents collected in it, and every functionary belonging to it also, high and low, upward and downward, from its son the Accountant-General to its father the Devil, and the whole blown to atoms with ten thousand hundred-weight of gunpowder, would reform it in the least!"

It was impossible not to laugh at the energetic gravity with which he recommended this strong measure of reform. When we laughed, he threw up his head, and shook his broad chest, and again the whole country seemed to echo to his Ha, ha, ha! It had not the least effect in disturbing the bird, whose sense of security was complete; and who hopped about the table with its quick head now on this side and now on that, turning its bright sudden eye on its master, as if he were no more than another bird.

"But how do you and your neighbour get on about the disputed right of way?" asked Mr. Jarndyce. "You are not free from the toils of the law yourself!"

"The fellow has brought actions against *me* for trespass, and I have brought actions against *him* for trespass," returned Mr. Boythorn. "By Heaven, he is the proudest fellow breathing. It is morally impossible that his name can be Sir Leicester. It must be Sir Lucifer."

"Complimentary to our distant relation!" said my Guardian laughingly, to Ada and Richard.

"I would beg Miss Clare's pardon and Mr. Carstone's pardon," resumed our visitor, "if I were not reassured by seeing in the fair face of the lady, and the smile of the gentleman, that it is quite unnecessary, and that they keep their distant relation at a comfortable distance."

"Or he keeps us," suggested Richard.

"By my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Boythorn, suddenly firing another volley, that fellow is, and his father was, and his grandfather was, the most stiff-necked, arrogant, imbecile, pig-headed numskull, ever, by some inexplicable mistake of Nature, born in any station of life but a walking-stick's! The whole of that family are the most solemnly conceited and consummate blockheads!— But it's no matter; he should not shut up my path if he were fifty baronets melted

into one, and living in a hundred Chesney Wolds, one within another, like the ivory balls in a Chinese carving. The fellow, by his agent, or secretary, or somebody, writes to me, 'Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, presents his compliments to Mr. Lawrence Boythorn, and has to call his attention to the fact that the green pathway by the old parsonage-house, now the property of Mr. Lawrence Boythorn, is Sir Leicester's right of way, being in fact a portion of the park of Chesney Wold; and that Sir Leicester finds it convenient to close up the same.' I write to the fellow, 'Mr. Lawrence Boythorn presents his compliments to Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, and has to call *his* attention to the fact that he totally denies the whole of Sir Leicester Dedlock's positions on every possible subject, and has to add, in reference to closing up the pathway, that he will be glad to see the man who may undertake to do it.' The fellow sends a most abandoned villain with one eye, to construct a gateway. I play upon that execrable scoundrel with a fire-engine, until the breath is nearly driven out of his body. The fellow erects a gate in the night. I chop it down and burn it in the morning. He sends his myrmidons to come over the fence, and pass and repass. I catch them in humane man traps, fire split peas at their legs, play upon them with the engine—resolve to free mankind from the insupportable burden of the existence of those lurking ruffians. He brings actions for trespass; I bring actions for trespass. He brings actions for assault and battery; I defend them, and continue to assault and batter. Ha, ha, ha!"

To hear him say all this with unimaginable energy, one might have thought him the angriest of mankind. To see him at the very same time, looking at the bird now perched upon his thumb, and softly smoothing its feathers with his forefinger, one might have thought him the gentlest. To hear him laugh, and see the broad good nature of his face then, one might have supposed that he had not a care in the world, or a dispute, or a dislike, but that his whole existence was a summer joke.

"No, no," he said, "no closing up of my paths, by any Dedlock! Though I willingly confess," here he softened in a moment, "that Lady Dedlock is the most accomplished lady in the world, to whom I would do any homage that a plain gentleman, and no baronet with a head seven hundred years thick, may. A man who joined his regiment at twenty, and, within a week, challenged the most imperious and presumptuous coxcomb of a commanding officer that ever drew the breath of life through a tight waist—and got broke

for it—is not the man to be walked over, by all the Sir Lucifers, dead or alive, locked or unlocked. Ha, ha, ha!"

. . . I saw him so often, in the course of the evening, which passed very pleasantly, contemplate Richard and Ada with an interest and a satisfaction that made his fine face remarkably agreeable as he sat at a little distance from the piano listening to the music—and he had small occasion to tell us that he was passionately fond of music, for his face showed it—that I asked my Guardian, as we sat at the backgammon board, whether Mr. Boythorn had ever been married.

"No," said he. "No."

"But he meant to be!" said I.

"How did you find out that?" he returned, with a smile.

"Why, Guardian," I explained . . . "there is something so tender in his manner, after all, and he is so very courtly and gentle to us, and—"

. . . "He was all but married, once. Long ago. And once."

"Did the lady die?"

"No—but she died to him. That time has had its influence on all his later life. Would you suppose him to have a head and a heart full of romance yet?"

"I think, Guardian, I might have supposed so. . . ."

"He has never since been what he might have been," said Mr. Jarndyce, "and now you see him in his age with no one near him but his servant, and his little yellow friend."

Referring to the first years of his acquaintance with Walter Savage Landor, John Forster remarked that "the Boythorn of *Bleak House* was the Landor of this earlier time, from a few of whose many attractive and original qualities, omitting all the graver, our great master of fiction drew that new and delightful creature of his fancy." Charles Dickens first met Landor in 1838, when Landor was sixty-three and had been three years separated from his wife and family. Dickens was thirty-seven years his junior, and though there followed between them a cordial friendship of twenty years, the disparity in age precluded the understanding of intimacy. Probably he knew little more of Landor's domestic tragedy than Mr. Jarndyce hinted of Boythorn's to his ward.

Boythorn's habit of exclamation—the inevitable "By Heavens"

and "God bless my souls"—his violence of invective, energy of utterance, and bursts of boisterous laughter were notoriously Landor's. When Dickens knew him, he was a celebrity and not indisposed mischievously to lend colour to his established reputation for unorthodox opinions by plunging into reckless paradox for the sake of stimulating argument. He was also notorious for the wildest exaggeration on the impulse of emotion; Boythorn's assurance that he would infinitely rather destroy himself than keep his hostess waiting was inspired by Dickens's memory of Landor's dismay when Count D'Orsay pointed out the incompleteness of his dress before entering Lady Blessington's drawing-room. Similarly, Boythorn's spleen against the "most abandoned ruffian" who misdirected him reflected Landor's excesses under such annoyances, as instanced by the feud he conducted at Florence against the British minister and his entourage as a result of a slight discourtesy.

Doubtless in much the same terms as Boythorn related his conflict with Sir Leicester Dedlock over the right of way, Landor had recalled to Dickens some details of his disputes with the tenantry on his Llanthony estate. His description must have been signally graphic, for the discovery of his correspondence with his Abergavenny attorney, Baker Gabb, reveals the Llanthony troubles more in tune with Boythorn's exploits than his previous biographers have shown.

Landor's "little yellow friend" for twelve years of his loneliness at Bath was his Pomeranian dog, on whom he lavished such tenderness and enthusiastic encomiums as Boythorn on his canary. When Dickens first knew him, he had a tame marten, which doubtless suggested Boythorn's canary. Dickens chose the canary in preference to a dog because the idea of the tiny bird's hopping fearlessly on Boythorn's head while its master boisterously related his violences offered the more extravagant antithesis. The choice was characteristic of Dickens's art, which tended always to distort, by over-emphasis and exaggeration, character into caricature. The portrait-painter, seeking

truth to life, looks for the subtle lights and shades of character; the caricaturist seizes upon outstanding oddities and exaggerates them to impress at a glance.

Boythorn is a caricature of Landor. Dickens, the caricaturist, depicted in Boythorn some of Landor's most marked eccentricities at the time when he knew him best, as a man between sixty and seventy. It was a caricature producing an impression readily recognisable by anybody who had a superficial acquaintance with Landor at that time—who had, for instance, sat with him at dinner as Mr. Jarndyce's wards sat with Boythorn. Dickens and Forster—who was Dickens's own age, and became acquainted with Landor only two years earlier —regarded Landor with the same eyes as Jarndyce's young wards saw Boythorn; to them he was a "dear old man," lovable and admirable in spite of, even because of, his oddities.

Forster acknowledged that Dickens sketched only a few of "many attractive and original qualities, omitting all the graver." But when he came to write Landor's biography, the image of Boythorn intruded as insistently as King Charles's head upon Mr. Dick in *David Copperfield*. He saw Landor always as Boythorn the caricature; through all the sixty years before he made his acquaintance, he makes Landor bluster his turbulent, headlong way as Boythorn. And the lovableness of Boythorn of *Bleak House* is acidulated in Forster's *Landor* by Forster's memory of his own difference with Landor in the old man's last years, and by the reminiscences supplied in splenetic ramblings by Landor's senile surviving brother Robert.

Recent years have witnessed a movement to show "Lamb before Elia," seeking to show Charles Lamb as he was, divested of the Elia legend; the time is overdue to reveal "Landor before Boythorn." Besides Forster's official biography, the only full-length study of Landor is Sir Sidney Colvin's monograph in the "English Men of Letters" series, published fifty years ago, which is little more than a capable compression of Forster's book and for that reason is read as the authority on Landor's life. Since the publication of Colvin's book, various aspects and

periods of Landor's life have been illuminated by the diligent researches of a few enthusiasts, working for little reward. Foremost of these, the late Stephen Wheeler published in 1897 *Letters and Other Unpublished Writings of Walter Savage Landor,* in 1899 his *Letters of Landor Private and Public* contained Landor's copious correspondence with Rose Graves-Sawle and a selection of his writings for the *Examiner,* he collaborated with T. J. Wise in the monumental *Bibliography of Landor* and splendidly edited Landor's English poetry. In *Walter Savage Landor: Last Days, Letters and Conversations,* Mr. H. C. Minchin edited Landor's letters to Browning during the last five years of his life, the main documentary evidence of that period. Landor's letters to Mary Boyle were edited for a magazine by James Russell Lowell as inadequately as he handled Thackeray's letters to Mrs. Brookfield, and his letters to his Rugby schoolfellow, Walter Birch, appeared in an article by the Rev. E. H. R. Tatham for the *Fortnightly Review* of February 1910. Most recently, Mr. R. H. Super's research sufficiently indicated the identity of Landor's Welsh mistress, Nancy Jones, his affair with whom fairly certainly shipwrecked his projected marriage with the heiress of Studley Castle.

Apart from the justice of a re-assessment on the lines of Landor before Boythorn, these publications provide sufficient excuse for a re-statement of Landor's life story. In addition, besides countless details discovered during three years of work on the subject, the present writer owes to Miss Baker-Gabb, of Abergavenny, the use of Landor's letters to her ancestor, which were unknown to Forster; to Mr. Walter Noble Landor, of Rugeley, a wealth of information about the Landor family, as well as transcripts of the voluminous correspondence between Landor and members of his family, most of which was examined by Forster, who, however, suppressed much of importance from deference to Landor's children; and to Dr. M. F. Ashley-Montagu the generous gift of copious materials collected during years of research in preparation for a biography which, eventually, he laid aside for other work.

It was acknowledged by Boythorn's creator, when he reviewed Forster's biography in *All the Year Round*, that Landor's name was "inseparably associated in the writer's mind with the dignity of generosity: with a noble scorn of all littleness, all cruelty, oppression, fraud, and false pretence." It was acknowledged by those who met him that Landor was one of the most curiously attractive personalities in contemporary letters; literary history recognises him as the purest of English prose writers. But his title to recognition as one of the great political thinkers and philosophers of his time, necessarily denied by contemporaries to one in advance of his age, has been obscured for posterity by the Boythorn legend, masking with the motley of eccentricity the lifelong lover of liberty, seeker of truth and beauty, and passionate hater of humbug and injustice. Unlike Boythorn's, Landor's superlatives did not "go off like blank cannons and hurt nothing."

Any reader of his prose realises that he is in the presence of one of the most lucid intellects of all time. Years of study sharpened his mental vision till he could see directly into the depths of a problem, of which his vast knowledge, allied with his unshakable sincerity and disinterestedness, quickly constructed a solution. His sympathetic understanding of others made lasting the friendships readily induced by his personal charm. Only in directing the course of his own life his intellect failed to serve him. Though he grew to disdain any sort of personal reward, he began life with a fair share of individual ambition, but he was too staunchly steadfast to principle, too inevitably governed by impulse, for worldly success. All his life he was a rebel—from his boyhood, when he was expelled from Rugby, till at eighty-three, he defied the law and went into exile rather than submit to a sentence he regarded as unjust. In all save two things he failed—he failed to rival Wordsworth and Byron in poetic fame, he abandoned politics in disgust, his expedition to Spain as a volunteer against the hated Napoleon was abortive, he lost a fortune in trying to provide an ignorant and indigent peasantry with the benefits of a model estate, he made a luckless

marriage, he lost the affection of his children, he never succeeded in being taken seriously as a political thinker, though his wisdom was repeatedly proved by subsequent events. He succeeded only in gaining the gratitude of all who knew him by the richness of his personality, and in bequeathing to posterity one of the rarest legacies of prose in English letters.

SAVAGE LANDOR

CHAPTER I

THE REBEL IN THE MAKING

§ 1

THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS BIRTH had especial significance in relation to the course of Landor's life. For, if he had not enjoyed the good fortune to be born the heir to a considerable estate, he could not have given unbridled rein to that rebellious independence of conduct and opinion which became the most obvious trait of his personality. His love of antiquity led him to fancy that his family derived from the Norman De la Laundes, who had held lands in the neighbourhood of his own Warwickshire estates, but genealogical research reveals the Landors as Staffordshire stock, tracing no further back than a yeoman of Swynnerton in Henry VIII's time. A Landor settled at Rugeley in 1589, and his great-grandson, Walter, served as sheriff of Staffordshire in 1698–99. The family subsequently benefited by profitable marriages, for, after Robert Landor of Rugeley had married the co-heiress of Walter Noble of Longdon, his son and successor, Walter Landor, took for his second wife Elizabeth Savage of Tachbrook, who brought him some eighty thousand pounds.

Walter Savage Landor, born at Warwick on 30th January 1775, was the eldest child of this union, which produced three other sons—Charles Savage (1777–1849), who became a parson, Henry Eyres (1780–1866), a lawyer and land agent, and Robert Eyres (1781–1869), whose little known work as a

writer has received adequate attention only from Mr. Eric Partridge [1]—and three daughters, none of whom ever married—Elizabeth (1776–1854), Mary Anne (1778–1818), and Ellen (1783–1838). The father for some years practised medicine at Warwick; "it was, I believe, not unusual," wrote Robert Landor to Forster, "for even the eldest sons of private gentlemen to engage in some profession during their father's lifetime." From Rugby he went up to Worcester College, Oxford, in 1750, took his arts degree in 1754, and proceeded to a medical degree from St. Alban Hall in 1760, the year in which he married Mary, only child of Richard Wright, of Warwick. Of the children of his first marriage only a single daughter survived childhood; she married into the old family of Arden, to which Shakespeare's mother belonged. When his second wife received her inheritance, he resigned his practice, and divided his time between his house at Warwick and the two country houses of the Savage estates, Ipsley Court, near Redditch, and Bishops Tachbrook, near Leamington.

Both these estates, as well as the Landor property in Staffordshire, were settled in entail upon Elizabeth Landor's eldest son, who thus from his earliest childhood knew himself to be heir to a considerable fortune. For her younger children there remained only what she could save from her share in her father's personal fortune and her interest, shared with her three sisters, in the Buckinghamshire manor of Hughenden (afterwards Disraeli's home), which descended to her from a great-uncle after the expiry of a life interest held by Lady Conyngham. The natural affection of a mother was bound to be enlisted in the interests of the sufferers from the manifest injustice of this arrangement, and whatever cause for displeasure his subsequent conduct occasioned, there seems grounds for suspicion that Elizabeth Landor allowed her eldest son to realise too plainly, even from childhood, that her concern for the future of her

[1] This, and all authorities subsequently cited, will be found in the Bibliographical List on page 476. The list is arranged in alphabetical order, and works will be found under their authors' names, except in the case of newspapers, periodicals, works of reference, etc., which are listed by their titles.

younger children excluded him from an equal share of her consideration.

Colvin remarked that Mrs. Landor's "love for her children was solicitous and prudent rather than passionate or very tender"; presumably he judged from the evidence of her relations with her eldest son. She was a typical woman of her class and time. Women of the squirearchy in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries regarded duty as the sole correct guide for human conduct; any deviation from duty's narrow path, due to whatever natural emotion or constitutional idiosyncrasy, was a weakness and a fault. The mother of Charles Reade, the novelist, was such another woman as Mrs. Landor. They devoted the best years of their lives to the bearing and rearing of large families, and having brought them to maturity, expected them to do their duty as their parents had done. The eldest son should equip himself to take his father's place as manager of the family estate; he should marry a wife whose dowry would add to the estate, and breed by her a family like his father's before him. The younger sons should marry as well as they could, and carve out careers according to their lights in the approved professions. The daughters should wait, unconscious of their physical potentialities, to be asked for their hands in marriage by men of such social and financial position or prospects as could be parentally approved; if no such proposals were forthcoming, they must continue unconscious of their physical potentialities, devote themselves to the comfort of their parents' declining years, and spend their own declining years in pathetic loneliness. A harsh but simple creed, it served England well for a century, during which the sons of the squirearchy scattered wide about the world to explore, acquire, and administer the territories which became the British Empire.

Of Elizabeth Landor's children, her eldest son alone failed to sustain the traditions of his class. The daughters failed to attract suitable suitors, but otherwise behaved fittingly, dutifully attending upon their mother, performing their duties as ladies of the manor, and wistfully watching the growth of their

brothers' families. Charles Landor obediently assumed holy orders; the Landors had the gift of a living at Colton in Staffordshire, and when he succeeded his uncle, the Rev. John Landor, there in 1806, Charles was suitably provided for. A muscular athlete, loving the open air, Charles figures little in his elder brother's life, though he evidently maintained close relations with his mother and sisters.

Robert, youngest of the four sons, emerges a shadowy personality from Mr. Partridge's biographical sketch. When his turn came for school, Dr. Landor felt his finances would not sustain a fourth son at Rugby, so Robert went to Bromsgrove Grammar School, whence he obtained a scholarship at Worcester College, Oxford, so enabling him to join his brother Charles at their father's old college. He also entered the Church, but after a few months as curate-in-charge of a Dorsetshire parish in 1805, appears to have performed no regular ecclesiastical function for twelve years, till, in 1817, family influence secured him a living at Hughenden. It seems that during these years he was in close touch with his eldest brother, whose literary tastes and inclinations he alone of the family shared, and their intimacy ceased—significantly—shortly before his preferment to the Hughenden living. In 1829, he obtained the living of Birlingham in Worcestershire, where he lived in seclusion for the rest of his life. Forster applied to him for assistance when compiling his biography of Landor, but either he was deliberately reticent, or Forster suppressed much information received about Landor's early life. Little known during his lifetime, Robert Landor's literary work has been examined to-day by the merest handful of students; not till twenty years after the publication of his *History of Nineteenth Century Literature* did George Saintsbury add a footnote in the ninth edition of that work to mention Robert Landor, remarking that "it may be questioned whether Robert's powers were much less—intellectually they were perhaps greater—than Walter's; but he never got them into working order, and he is sometimes (in his later years especially) very obscure."

Third of the four brothers, Henry Landor had the least pretensions, but in a worldly sense proved the most successful. He followed his elder brothers to Rugby, and expected to follow them to Oxford, but when Robert won his scholarship, their father decided that he could not afford to maintain three sons simultaneously at the university, and Henry entered the office of a London conveyancer. This disappointment must have awakened his mother's sympathy. Robert told Forster that, while his mother was "an anxious rather than a fond parent, she was scrupulously just." But she was also evidently both lacking in imagination and addicted to the rigidity of opinion and outlook usual in those self-consciously intent upon justice. If Henry had not been her favourite before, he became so after being excluded from sharing with his brothers the privilege of going to Oxford. Doubtless by her device, he received the bequest of a small estate at Whitnash, near Tachbrook, and returning there to professional practice, became "for some forty years the busiest and most esteemed land-agent in Warwickshire." He became "the family adviser and manager," and Robert declared that, "under the guidance of my brother Henry, who managed her affairs," his mother "would give as much to any of her children as was consistent with justice to the rest." Robert added that Henry "would never accept any share in the common property," and, as Mr. Partridge observes, the little that is known of him is all to his credit, but he flourished so well that he ended his days as master of the Tachbrook home which was part of his eldest brother's birthright, and clearly he enjoyed more of his mother's confidence than any of her sons.

From the first, Mrs. Landor lavished scant maternal affection on her eldest son. She had little time to watch his progress from the nursery, being continually in and out of child-bed to produce six children in the eight years following his birth. At the age of only four and a half, he was sent away from home to school at Knowle, about ten miles from Warwick on the Birmingham road, and from this tender age he entered the family

circle only during his school holidays, which were spent alternately at Warwick, Tachbrook, and, apparently less frequently, at Ipsley. In old age, as is the custom of very old men, he often recalled wistfully the scenes of his childhood, and he cherished tender memories of both Tachbrook and Warwick. In 1852 he wrote to his brother Henry:

> Dear old Tachbrooke! it is the only locality for which I feel any affection. Well do I remember it from my third or fourth year; and the red filberts at the top of the garden, and the apricots from the barn-wall, and Aunt Nancy cracking the stones for me. If I should ever eat apricots with you again, I shall not now cry for the kernel.

And two years later, he reminded Henry of a boyish adventure connected with a certain apple-tree, which still stood "close upon the nut-walk, and just of the same size and appearance as it was seventy years ago." When, in 1853, he stayed at Warwick as the guest of his sister Elizabeth, he picked up on the gravel-walk the first two mulberries that had fallen, and remembered having done the same just seventy-five years before. After the visit he wrote to his sister of the joy he had felt to stay again in his old home, "with its dear old mulberry-trees, its grand cedars, the chestnut-wood with the church appearing through it."

For Ipsley, close by the needle factories of Redditch, he never felt the same affection. "Never," he wrote in 1830 to his sister, "was any habitation more thoroughly odious-red soil, mince-pie woods, and black and greasy needle-makers." As evidence that Landor cherished tender memories of the place, Colvin published some horrible doggerel, which seems to have been inspired by reminiscences of his later boyhood, since he speaks of meeting "a maiden fair and fond"

> Expecting me beneath a tree
> Of shade for two but not for three.
> Ah! my old yew, far out of view,
> Why must I bid you both adieu.

The last execrable couplet reflects his passion for trees, which frequently inspired him to verse and, during his ill-fated venture as a Monmouthshire landowner, to extravagant outlay on the plantation of woods. To Southey in 1811 he recalled "a little privet which I planted when I was about six years old, and which I considered the next of kin to me after my mother and elder sister," and how, "whenever I returned from school or college, for the attachment was not stifled in that sink, I felt something like uneasiness till I had seen and measured it."

He loved all nature fervently. In verse he related his aversion to picking flowers, preferring

> To let all flowers live freely, and all die
> Whene'er their Genius bids their souls depart,
> Among their kindred in their native place.

It was said of him that, while at Rugby, he once pulled a boy's ears for pelting at the rooks in the School Close, and was "almost the only one of his day that never took a bird's nest." He must have been one of a mere half-dozen born and bred of the country gentry in the late eighteenth century who ventured to disapprove of field sports, on which he wrote later in life:

> Let men do these things if they will. Perhaps there is no harm in it; perhaps it makes them no crueler than they would be otherwise. But it is hard to take away what we cannot give; and life is a pleasant thing, at least to birds. No doubt the young ones say tender things one to another, and even the old ones do not dream of death.

His allowance to animals of natural intelligence and a capacity for feeling comparable with humans was seen by Dickens only as an eccentricity fit for caricature in Boythorn's canary. Few men of his time loved and understood animals so well, and his devotion to dogs equalled that of Galsworthy, who has written more vividly of canine character than any other writer. "Dogs," said Landor, "are blessings, true blessings."

He never rode to hounds, even as a boy, which must alone have marked him as an oddity in the eyes of the sporting gentry of Warwickshire. He once told Southey that he was "fond of riding when I was young," but gave it up when he "found that it produces a rapidity in the creation of thought which makes us forget what we are doing." But it seems more likely that his distaste for riding developed when he found himself outshone by his brother Charles, who became a brilliant horseman; it supplies the first evidence of the arrogance which cast such a lowering shadow across his character. He could tolerate no competition, must always stand out from his fellows in unchallenged pre-eminence, and so he gave up riding when his younger brother surpassed his skill as a horseman. Though at one period he kept three horses in his stables, they were only for carriage use, and his dudgeon at his lack of accomplishment nourished an unreasoning spleen against horses, the one variety of animal which escaped his affection, so that in his seventieth year he remarked acidly that, "next to servants, horses are the greatest trouble in life."

Charles Landor was a noted athlete, and Forster believed that "Rugby recollections have doubtless given to Walter many of the exploits of this younger brother." But though Charles was taller and of finer presence, "both as boy and man," the biggest and strongest are not always the most skilled at games, and Landor was so universally remembered by Rugby contemporaries as an outstanding personality that it is unlikely that they confused his physical accomplishments with those of his brother. Though the massive shoulders, thick, short neck, and leonine head, familiar from his photographs, suggest a big man, Landor was the shortest of the four brothers—all fine-looking men of constitutions commensurate with their physique, as their longevity testifies—but, though of no more than medium height, he had the square, sturdy build, swelling later to burliness, suggestive of exceptional physical strength.

He was still some months short of his ninth year when he proceeded from Knowle to Rugby in 1783. In the same batch

of new boys were Henry Francis Cary, the translator of Dante, Arthur Clifton, afterwards a general and knighted, and Samuel Butler, who became Bishop of Lichfield and grandfather of the author of *Erewhon*. All were older than he, and with Clifton, he fought his first fight, of which it was written that "Landor used to say *he ought to have licked*. It is probably therefore Arthur Clifton did lick." In verse Landor said he "fought never with any but an older lad, and never lost but two fights in thirteen"; it is a tribute to his reputation that only his defeats were remembered. The other beating he received at the hands of Walter Birch, who, though as old as, or older than, Landor, came to Rugby three years later, and after the fight, became one of Landor's closest friends.

Charles Apperley, afterwards celebrated as the sporting writer "Nimrod," who was two years younger than Landor but did not enter Rugby till the summer of 1789, relates in his memoirs that Landor "had a great name in the school as a scholar, a cricketer, a foot-ball player, and a pugilist, in all which characters he had very few equals." The official Rugbeian chronicle says "he was famous for riding out of bounds, boxing, leaping, net-casting, stone throwing, and making Greek and Latin Verses." Aggressiveness being a feature of his character all his life, his pugilism is not surprising. Nor is his riding out of bounds; his impatience of authority alone would have been an inducement to breaking bounds, but in those days it was a custom with the "bloods" of Rugby to ride over to a hostelry at Lutterworth for the indulgence of callow dissipation, and though Landor never evinced much taste for drinking, he had a healthy amorous appetite. Probably at Lutterworth he first pursued a clandestine amour with some barmaid or buxom country wench.

Of his cricket and football no details appear. His prowess at casting a net provides the sole instance of his indulgence in a sport entailing the destruction of life; perhaps he held the academic argument, often produced by fishermen, that fish lack the same feeling as birds or footed animals, but more likely he

indulged the practice solely because his skill excited envious admiration, contributing to his reputation for brilliance. Forster, informed by Robert Landor, notes his athletic accomplishments, but adds that "he was at all times disposed rather to walk by the river side with a book than engage in such trials of strength and activity." No doubt he fully realised the theatrical effect of this—how the enviously admiring would marvel, after watching his able exhibition with the casting net, to see him carelessly leave the sport, as if he had only condescended to it to show them how it should be done, and wander off alone with a book.

But books early became his chief interest. Long afterwards he told Southey:

> The first two books I ever bought were at the stall of an old woman at Rugby. They happened to be Baker's *Chronicle* and Drayton's *Polyolbion*. I was very fond of both because they were bought by me. They were my own; and if I did not read them attentively, my money would have been thrown away, and I must have thought and confessed myself injudicious. I have read neither since, and I never shall possess either again.

He read much in bed at night—he doubted if he "ever slept five hours consecutively, rarely four, even in boyhood"—and recalled how he "was once flogged for sleeping at the evening lesson, which I had learnt, but having mastered it, I dozed." Robert Landor said that "at school and college he had gained superiority over his companions," for "there are better scholars passing from our public schools now than were then the fellows of my college who had taken their master's degree." According to Robert, it was not till Landor went to live in Italy and began work on the *Imaginary Conversations* that he applied himself thoroughly to Greek literature, but he admitted that "Walter increased his Latin all his life long, because he had pleasure in it." Evidence of his precocious knowledge alike of English and Latin poetry appears in his having written, at sixteen, transla-

tions of Cowley into Latin verse, and "correcting his extravagance."

Of arithmetic he declared himself ignorant all his life "according to the process in use," but though during his schooling at Knowle he suffered equally from the problems of grammar, his introduction to books led him to delight in the study of language, and he developed a lifelong fascination in the derivation of words, inciting him to read "the Port-Royal Grammar twice through, and Ainsworth's Latin Dictionary once." However scrappy his knowledge of Greek may have been, it was sufficiently in advance of the average to appear impressive; Landor himself declared that "Butler, afterwards bishop of Lichfield, and myself, were the first at Rugby, or, I believe, any other school, who attempted a Greek verse," and this is endorsed by Bloxam, who says that "at one period" Landor and Butler were "the only two praepostors that did Greek Verses."

His masters delighted in their pupil's brilliance. His tutor, said Forster, was Dr. Sleath, but "Nimrod" says there were two Sleaths at Rugby in his time, and if Landor's tutor was the one called "Old Bacchus," he must have been the least likely curb on his pupil's tendencies to arrogance, for he was "a very good-natured man," and allowed "Nimrod," who had no such pretensions in scholarship as Landor's, to fancy that "I knew as much Greek as he did." He tried in vain to induce Landor to compete for a prize poem, but as Landor told Southey, "I never would contend at school with any one for anything. I formed the same resolution when I went to college, and I have kept it." Few boys or men of imagination have ever tolerated with patience the pointless pedantry of examinations, but, in Landor's case, his arrogance repudiated his entry into competition lest even a minor set-back might detract from the supremacy of his reputation. Just as he gave up riding when he saw that his skill could not excel his younger brother's, so he would not compete for a school prize lest he might be beaten into second place by such a rival as Butler.

Forster describes the headmaster, Dr. James, as "a scholar of fair repute, who did something to redeem the school from the effects of the long and dull mastership that preceded his." Truly James was not dull, but "Nimrod" amply illustrates his opinion that he was not "altogether the man for the situation he held." He was a type familiar among schoolmasters in valuing himself exuberantly on his wit, and "by his familiar jokes at one time—after his dinner, &c., especially, for the doctor was no teetotaller—and ill-timed severity at another, he was neither respected nor beloved. . . . The practice of flogging was unmercifully pursued at Rugby; and it was generally believed that James—and he alone was the executioner—delighted in it. . . . He highly appreciated talent in his pupils, and certainly turned out several very clever ones into the world."

The relations between such a master and the brilliant and arrogant Landor may be easily imagined. "James," said "Nimrod," "was proud of Landor, and was inclined to cultivate his friendship as well as his mind; but, to use a common expression, Landor would not have him at any price." No doubt the master made a favourite of the boy, and, in his cups, bandied witticisms with the familiarity which incites contempt; then, when the boy presumed upon his privilege as a favourite, the doctor, in the mood of the morning after the night before, would descend on him with unexpected and seemingly unreasonable severity. So he not only lost the opportunity of securing either the boy's affection or esteem, but antagonised him and inspired a sense of grievance and injustice, while any subsequent advances of friendship, being construed as weakness, excited contempt.

As Landor came to be a senior boy and a figure of influence, the arrogance and impetuosity of his character found vent in an attitude of thinly veiled rebellion. News of the French Revolution in 1789 fired his imagination, and made him an ardent apostle of liberty, equality and fraternity. Bloxam relates that

> Dr. James, an Etonian, introduced the Eton custom of having the title of "Mister" prefixed to the sons of the nobility in the school

list. . . . Praepostors then called over the names. . . . Landor, in calling over, would always omit the title of "Mister," to the great annoyance of Dr. James.

This defiance of authority must have greatly impressed the younger boys, but Bloxam adds:

> It was not on this account, as the boy believed, that Dr. James desired his father to remove him, or because, as stated in Forster's life of him, he and Dr. James differed about the quantity of a syllable. The real reason was some of his Alcaics. In one copy he introduced allusions to the Altar of the Roman Goddess who presided over the sewers of Rome built by Tarquinius Priscus. Another Alcaic, still more gross, was "non posteris, sed post–ibus haec Landor offert."

Forster probably knew the true story, but, hesitating, with Victorian reverence for decorum, to say frankly that Landor perpetrated bawdy verses, obscured the cause of complaint and muddled the tale of its outcome.

He relates how Landor thought that "Dr. James either would not or could not appreciate what he did in Latin verse, and that when he was driven to take special notice of it, he took the worst, not the best, for the purpose." Elsewhere, referring to the Rugby custom of granting a whole day's holiday for the best exercise of the week, he mentions the awe with which a fag of the time read the notice, "Play-day for Landor's Latin verses." But "Nimrod" significantly tells that Butler was reckoned "the best scholar in the school," as " 'Play for Butler' was oftener proclaimed for him than for any other boy." This surely indicates the source of Landor's resentment. He could not brook rivalry; Forster says that Landor "often generously spoke" of Birch as the best Rugby scholar, but he probably said this because he knew that he was himself really better than Birch, but felt a secret doubt that he was as good as Butler. His arrogance would not allow that Butler was better; hence, when Butler was awarded more play-days, he decided that his work was not fairly judged. This jealousy of Butler was ad-

mitted by Landor in the account of his removal from Rugby given in a letter to Walter Birch at the time of his father's death in 1805:

> You had left Rugby at the time to which I allude. It was seldom that I took the trouble to write a good, or even tolerable, exercise for myself, though I could get anyone else a shilling when I liked. But on one occasion when the subject pleased me, I was determined to try whether James would continue to treat my verses with the same indifference as had long made me insensible to his praise or censure. Butler on the same occasion wrote a profusion of verses. James extolled his. In mine he found two faults, but added that they were better than usual, and that they proved to him I had the capacity, if I had the will. They might perhaps have had two faults, while Butler's had but one; mine, however, were partial, his was total. . . . When the boys compared them—who are not, however, very nice critics—they gave mine the preference unanimously; and when James gave me the shilling, which he did, I cried aloud to my fag, "Here Blacky!" and gave it to him. This was thought an heroic action. James said I had the pride of the devil and the impudence of he did not know what. "Then, sir," said I, "Let me tell you; it is the impudence of those who say my verses are worse than Butler's." Here followed many complaints of my general negligence, and some few compliments. I was sent away soon after, and this anecdote among others was repeated to my father.

In this account Landor omits any mention of the further insolence to which Forster thus refers:

> When told very graciously on one occasion to copy out fairly in the play-book verses by himself of which he thought indifferently, Landor, in making the copy, put private additions to it of several lines, with a coarse allusion beginning, "Haec sunt malorum pessima carminum quae Landor unquam scripsit." This offence was forgiven; but it was followed by another of which the circumstances were such as to render it impossible that he should continue longer in the school. The right at first was on Landor's side: for Dr. James had strongly insisted on, and the other as firmly had declined, the correction of an alleged false quantity found really not to exist. But, apart from the right or the wrong, an expression rudely used by the pupil was very sharply resented by the master, and only one result became possible.

Though he mentions it irrelevantly elsewhere, as an incident personally related to him by Landor himself, Forster does not cite the rude expression, but quotes Robert Landor's assurance that "he was not expelled from Rugby, but removed, as the less discreditable punishment, at the head master's suggestion. There was nothing unusual or disgraceful in the particular transgression, but a fierce defiance of all authority and a refusal to ask forgiveness." The final scene emerges from the reminiscences of "Nimrod":

> Landor had provoked the doctor to that extent that it was believed he intended to expel him, and was only prevented doing so by a strong regard for his father. A thought struck him however, that he would endeavour to conciliate his compliance with the rules of the school, by reasoning with him on the subject, and accordingly he approached his study for that purpose;—"Who is there?" asked Landor, on hearing the doctor rap. "It is I," replied the doctor; "I want to speak with you." "Get thee hence, Satan!" exclaimed Landor, laying extraordinary emphasis on the last word.

Clearly this was the culmination of long friction between master and pupil; no doubt the doctor, after losing his temper and punishing with rash severity some breach of discipline, had come thus to effect reconciliation, but this time Landor exasperated him with too flagrant impertinence. Probably the doctor hesitated to expel him for fear of himself appearing ridiculous and self-confessedly incompetent of subduing insubordination, so he preferred to write, as Landor told Forster, "to my father that I was rebellious and incited others to rebellion; and unless he took me away he should be obliged ('much to his sorrow') to expel me."

§ 2

He was "within five of the head" of the school on leaving Rugby; his removal must have occurred late in 1791, when he was sixteen, since Birch, who went up to Magdalen that year,

had already left. Forster says nothing of the tense atmosphere which must have greeted him on returning home, and little of Landor's father, except to emphasise the absence in the man of sixty of the failings most marked in the boy of sixteen.

> The slightest symptom of arrogance or vanity none can recollect in him. He disputed no one's pretensions, and was always silent about his own. With much more than the average amount of sense and learning common to country gentlemen of that time, he made no comparisons, but took his place among them unconscious of any difference that might have placed him far above them. Social and hospitable, he never thought of rivalry.

Dr. Landor was, in fact, a praiseworthy type of country squire —well above the level of a Western, but still far short of being an Allworthy. He had done very well for himself, especially by his second marriage, and while he sufficiently sustained the responsibilities of his position, he enjoyed its privileges with a clear conscience. Quite obviously he belonged to the vast majority of fathers in his social class, who conceived that they fulfilled their obligations as parents if they paid handsomely for their sons' education and housed them during the school holidays.

It is unlikely that he considered his eldest son unduly remarkable. He was sufficiently a scholar to appreciate the boy's classical attainments, but while he felt these a subject for congratulation, he probably manifested more evident satisfaction in the younger son Charles's prowess as a horseman. This alone would suffice to irritate in Landor the same sense of injustice which he conceived himself as suffering at the hands of Dr. James, and to rouse his pride and aggressiveness to militant antagonism. He may be pictured as normally a boy of loud and ebullient spirits, given to sudden moods of sullen resentment at ill-considered reproofs or tactless omissions of appreciation; exceptionally sensitive, he was what is called a "difficult" boy—the type which requires patient understanding and tactful management. From his father he received neither; Forster suggests

that "their only point of agreement" was "an excessive warmth of temper common to both." When, in the teeth of rebuke, the boy took refuge in defiance, the father saw him as an unlicked cub and a rebel.

A rebel Landor remained all his life. The environment of childhood can so mould a nature sensitive and impressionable as to establish the lights and shades of a lifetime's personality. When the shy and fragile De Quincey found himself in unsympathetic surroundings during boyhood, he shrank from society in self-pity as a pariah; the proud and assertive Landor, on the other hand, became disgruntled and unmanageable, a violent antagonist of all authority. As he grew towards adolescence, he must have been a most disturbing youth. His enthusiasm for the cause of revolutionary France, inspired by fellow-feeling with rebellion against oppression, must have shocked and enraged the orthodox conservatism of his law-abiding parent. His godfather, General Powell, subsequently a governor of Gibraltar, laughed at such boyish extravagances as the wish "that the French would invade England and assist us in hanging George the Third between two such thieves as the archbishops of Canterbury and York," but his parents looked askance at such revolutionary notions in their eldest son, fearing, not only on his own account, but lest he should infect his younger brothers with his ideas. So when he repeated his wish about the French invasion in his mother's hearing, his brother Robert remembered how she boxed his ears from behind:

> They were all terrified at Walter, wondering what he might do, when they heard their mother's high-heeled shoes clattering quickly over the margin of the uncarpeted oak near the door, and saw her neat little figure suddenly disappear. "I'd advise you, mother," shouted Walter after her, "not to try that sort of thing again."

The anecdote illustrates the incapacity of his parents to manage him. Neither had any notion of making a friend of him and meeting his arguments with gentle reason; the father stormed

and raved, and talked of flogging, if he did not flog, and the mother supported him by humiliating the boy's dignity in the presence of her younger children, and then running away to escape the explosion of his helpless indignation.

When he arrived at an age to sit at table with his elders, he vented such shocking expressions of violent opinion that his father would not have him in the room when he had guests. Sir Samuel Romilly, later Solicitor-General, frequently dined with Dr. Landor, but Robert doubted if "my brother Walter was ever present," for "he hated law and lawyers, then, almost as much as he despised the church and its ministers at all times; and the gentlemanly manners by which he was distinguished thirty years later, had then no existence." Even General Powell, who eyed with tolerance a spirited boy, felt that a wearer of his uniform could not countenance such revolutionary outbursts as Landor grew up, and declined to dine there when he was at home.

The picture sketched by Forster, on Robert Landor's authority, presents an unprepossessingly turbulent boy, egotistically careless of the discomfort he caused to everybody about him. Yet, apart from the fact that few people ever found cause for disliking Landor, there emerges even from Forster's pages a glimpse of other qualities. When both were old men, his brother Henry, who entered Rugby five years after his eldest brother, wrote to him: "Do you think I ever forget your kindness to me at Rugby, in threatening another boy who ill-treated me if he again persisted in similar conduct? Or your gift of money to me at that time, when I verily believe you had not another shilling left for your own indulgence?" Landor himself recalled how "poor little B.H. had three or four bottles to fill at the pump in a hard frost, and was crying bitterly, when I took pity on him and made him my fag, at three-pence a week I think. This exempted him from obedience to others, and I seldom exercised my *vested rights*." He was always impulsively generous, always on the side of the weak against the strong, and felt the horror of suffering common to imaginative minds.

"Birch and I thought ourselves men when we were only boys," he once wrote. Like De Quincey, he was impatient to grow up, to be rid of pedantic authority, to be independent and free to set out on the career of achievement dazzling his ambitious vision. He was unfortunate in encountering no such woman of charm and understanding as De Quincey's Lady Carbery, who would have encouraged him with the appreciation he craved and controlled his impulses. Always susceptible to feminine attraction, Landor was himself attractive to women. Forster quoted "a lively lady, who both liked and admired him," as saying "in his later life that the great enjoyment of walking out with him had only one drawback, that he was always knocking somebody down." The habit of forever railing against injustice, against some institution or person of authority—which characterised him through life and was caricatured by Dickens in Boythorn—must have struck women as attractive in a boy who was handsome, intellectually and athletically brilliant, and, moreover, very ready to evince admiration. One woman at least interested herself in him during his Rugby days—a cousin, on whose marriage he wrote at her request, when he was fourteen, his first original verses. Possibly her marriage removed her from a sphere where she might have wielded a beneficial influence, as appears from a letter in which she wrote:

> I think you are much in the right to make the most learned your friends and companions; but permit me to say, that though I think a proper spirit commendable and even necessary at times, yet, in my opinion, it is better to submit *sometimes* to those under whose authority we are, even when we think they are in fault, than to run the risk of being esteemed arrogant and self-sufficient.

Others who found him an attractive boy were the family of a fellow Rugbeian, Fleetwood Parkhurst, who lived at Ripple Court, on the banks of the Severn near Tewkesbury. Robert Landor said that his brother and Fleetwood Parkhurst "were very discordant," but they remained friends for several years,

"visiting each other's friends and travelling together; but with old Mr. Parkhurst, Walter was much the greater favourite, and he had always been very happy at Ripple." Forty years afterwards, when Landor returned from his Florentine exile to live at Bath, he renewed acquaintance with the family by meeting at his brother Robert's vicarage the daughter of Fleetwood Parkhurst, in whose husband, Anthony Rosenhagen, he made a friend so valued that he was moved to say "that old Parkhurst and his son-in-law Rosenhagen were the men who united most of virtue and most of politeness that he had ever met with." It was a failing of Landor's which helped to prompt Coleridge to wonder what he lacked to become a true poet, to insert lines of disturbing bathos among otherwise beautiful verses, and an example appears in the commonplace couplet, following graceful reference to "Malvern's verdant ridges" and "Sabrina's stream," in which he speaks of Mr. Parkhurst:

> The Lord of these domains was one
> Who loved me like an only son.

It is true that this old gentleman, who found interest and delight in the untamable spirit of an unusual boy, had not the responsibility of managing him, but the mutual respect and affection existing between Landor and a man of his father's generation indicates that the antagonism between father and son arose from parental shortcomings more culpable than the boy's waywardness. Nor did Dr. Landor make any effort to take his son in hand himself on his removal from Rugby. In the middle ages knights would themselves superintend their sons' progress to the winning of their spurs, but from the days when Tudor landlords took to keeping priests and parsons as pensioners down to modern times, it has been the practice of parents to leave the upbringing of their sons to paid pedagogues. As Landor was yet too young for the university, he had to be sent to one of those cynical philosophers who earn a living hardly by undertaking troublesome or backward boys—a "crammer."

He went to the vicar of Ashbourne, Derbyshire, the Rev. William Langley, "who had no other pupil," said Robert Landor, "and who seemed well qualified for the office by patience and gentleness"—the qualities which seem to have been notably absent in his home influences.

Besides being incumbent of the parish, Langley was also headmaster of Ashbourne Grammar School, the history of which institution shows him to have been a man of character. At the time of his appointment in 1752, the school was in a state of degeneracy, and the schoolhouse out of repair; there had been a succession of masters serving short terms, and Langley's immediate predecessor resigned "as it is inconvenient for him to perform the duties of his office." Within two years of his appointment, Langley was indicted by the governors, on the evidence of his assistant master, for inflicting wilful damage to school property, and fined ten pounds. Apparently he declined to pay the fine, and the governors re-appointed his predecessor in his place. The official record then lapses into discreet silence for full forty years, the next reported proceedings of the governors being their meeting in 1795 to appoint a successor to the "lately deceased" William Langley. Apparently Langley rebelled against the wretched conditions which had instigated the resignations of his several predecessors, and when the governors ignored his protest, he smashed up the decrepit furnishings to compel their replacement. Probably his re-appointed predecessor declined to return under the existing conditions, and the governors had to reinstate Langley and give him what he wanted. When Landor came to him, he was an old man with only four years to live, but one who had rebelled successfully against authority was clearly a man of spirit, who could readily find understanding sympathy with the fire in a boy like Landor.

"Though by no means ignorant, the tutor had very little more scholarship than the pupil, and his Latin verses were hardly so good as Walter's," but, brother Robert adds, with unconscious significance, "Walter always spoke of him with respect." This country clergyman, drowsing away his existence

in a parsonage remote among Derbyshire's loveliest beauties, proved a more capable mentor than the professional shepherds of Rugby and Oxford. Having no other pupil, "poor dear Langley," as Landor called him in affectionate reminiscence, made a friend of the boy, and, probably well aware of his own limitations as a scholar, allowed him to read as he pleased, encouraging him by casual discussion as between fellow-students instead of assuming the lecturer's pedagogic pomp. He "had seen Pope when he came to visit Oxford from Lord Harcourt's at Nuneham," and he had a friend who, as a boy, dined at the same table with Fielding. Such reminiscences impress with awe the imagination of a bookish boy with such reverence for the past as Landor, who remembered at Knowle an old woman who "was one hundred and two when I was four and a half," and marvelled that "she might have seen people who had seen not only Milton, but Shakespeare, Bacon, Spenser, and Raleigh."

Langley evidently also encouraged his writing English verse, and maybe assumed the inspirer of Landor's early loyalty to Pope and spleen against Warton for having attacked that idol, which lasted so long that in 1800 he could unfairly declare that he had been "drawn by the Wartons" into "raptures with what I now despise." When he came to write the imaginary conversation of Leofric and Godiva, he inserted the lines to Godiva, "In every hour, in every mood," which he had written as a boy beside the square pool at Rugby, and tells how he showed the verses to a schoolfellow, who laughed at him, and how he begged him not to "tell the other lads." Some of his efforts at Ashbourne have also survived, like the lines to "Medea at Corinth," dated by Forster as written in 1791, and "He loses all his fame who fights."

He matriculated at Trinity College, Oxford, on 13th November 1792, but the college buttery books show that it was not till January, the month of his eighteenth birthday, that he went into residence. As at Rugby, he was quickly recognised by dons and undergraduates alike as an outstanding personality. His tutor, "dear good Benwell," delighted in his scholarship, but

succeeded in influencing him no more effectively than Sleath or James. "Though I wrote better Latin verses than any undergraduate or graduate in the University," he wrote, with arrogance unmitigated by years, in 1857, "I could never be persuaded, by my tutor or friends, to contend for any prize whatever. I showed my compositions to Birch of Magdalen, my old friend at Rugby; and to Cary, translator of Dante; to none else." He still recoiled from the possibility of defeat administering a blow to his pride, and it is evidence of his obvious brilliance, of the force of his personality, and, to some extent, of a certain likable charm, that his overbearing arrogance did not excite derision and dislike. He himself loudly expressed contempt for the abilities of others; in his first published volume of verse he scoffed at the poetical attempts of two Trinity dons, Clark and Kett—whom De Quincey remembered as "well-known in Oxford by the name of Horse Kett, from his equine physiognomy"—and not only in this volume, but in the later one of 1802, he treated with bitter derision the work of the Rev. George Richards, a Trinity man newly elected to a fellowship at another college, who in 1791 had been awarded the prize offered for an English poem by the second Lord Harcourt.

This talent for satire—for guying the work of others—contributed to his reputation. In every generation, from Pope, through Byron and Oscar Wilde, down to our own day, appear plentiful examples of reputations for brilliance achieved by facile cleverness at the expense of others. Wilde told Frank Harris that "to write about yourself" was "the way to make yourself known," and the histories of successful men reveal the egregious gullibility of human sheep, who evince extraordinary readiness to accept the assertive egotist at his own assessment. Few have the knowledge to judge for themselves, fewer still the courage to abide by their own judgment, and Landor's arrogant self-confidence, supported by his facility, his ready fluency with speech or pen, and his out-spoken aggressiveness, impelled a general acceptance of his own estimate of his gifts. In actual fact, whatever he became during his middle-age in Italy, he was,

in youth, as Robert Landor told Forster, no very profound scholar. He was not a conscientious worker. At Rugby he might have beaten Butler if he had applied himself with equal diligence to the prosaic study of syntax and kindred subjects of dull groundwork. But he gambled on his brilliant facility; skill and imagination enabled him to surpass the mediocre without the laborious application necessary to lift the less talented even to the level of mediocrity. Armed with the sense of superiority he found it easy to pretend the possession of knowledge which actually he did not possess; in 1805 he professed to have read Dante's *Divina Commedia* and remarked on it contemptuously to Birch, yet years later, when writing the *Imaginary Conversations*, he confessed to having read only a fifth of the work. Like most men of imagination, he felt impatience with the academic pedantry of university educational methods, but his refusal to submit to examinations may have been inspired, not only by the possibility of wounds to his vanity by comparison with others, but by fear of unexpected deficiencies being exposed. So by superficial brilliance he was content to shine above the mediocre, but because, in the days of his youthful energy, he never applied himself whole-heartedly to a task such as his genius entitled him to undertake, he failed to compete in the fields of the first flight.

His reputation for brilliance was enhanced by his notoriety. He was "about the first student who wore his hair without powder," declining to receive the attentions of the college barber, whose duties included the dressing and powdering of the undergraduates' hair according to the prevailing aristocratic fashion. His tutor, awed by his temerity, warned him to take care lest they "stone you for a republican," but he continued to wear his "plain hair and queue tied with black ribbon," and soon others copied his example, among them Robert Southey. Southey came up to Balliol the same term as Landor to Trinity; like Landor, he had been compelled to leave school, was in arms against authority, and professed contempt for Oxford's academic institutions. But he possessed a conscience and stability lacking in

Landor. His impatience against Oxford arose, not from personal arrogance, but from a sense of humiliation that he should be compelled, while "Europe is on fire with freedom . . . , to sit and study Euclid or Hugo Grotius," and he sought by self-discipline to "learn to break a rebellious spirit." So, though he lived for months within a hundred yards of Landor, he never sought his acquaintance, and recalling some years later that Landor was "notorious as a mad Jacobin," added:

> His Jacobinism would have made me seek his acquaintance, but for his madness. He was obliged to leave the University for shooting at one of the fellows through the window.

But Southey must have heard much of Landor's "madness" before the shooting incident which ended his university career. It may be gathered that he was a leader, and his room a rendezvous, of the most violent Jacobin element among the undergraduates, that he won cheap admiration for his daring in guying dons like Kett, Clark, and Richards, and that he was regarded with disfavour by authority. When, in October 1894, Horne Tooke, Holcroft, Hardy, Thelwall, and others were indicted for high treason, Landor's expressions of revolutionary sentiments evidently invoked remonstrances from his friends. But, unlike Southey, Landor felt no inclination "to break a rebellious spirit," and his "Apology for Satire," published in his first book of poems, elaborates his creed at this time. The poem, in the form of a dialogue between the poet and a friend, begins with the latter admonishing:

> Too long, my friend! hath Satire's camp confin'd
> Each active effort of thy youthful mind.
> Were it not better to have ideally roved
> Along the paths that happier poets loved.

Landor then rails against the existing state of literature, with fine scorn of Kett and Richards, till the friend—possibly his tutor Benwell—interposes:

Hush! why complain? of treason have a care;
You heard of Holcroft and of Tooke—beware—
(P) I heard the whole; nor deem it a disgrace—
(F) Tho' danger surely—(P) to lament their case.
Without their talents I have only aim'd
Gently to *hint* what Pope aloud proclaim'd.
Before a tyrant Juvenal display'd
Truth's hated form and Satire's flaming blade;
With hand unshaken bore her mirror-shield:
Vice gazed and trembled—shriek'd and left the field.
Shall I dissemble, then? (F) Dissemble? no.
Be silent only, and avoid the blow.

But Landor declined the counsel of caution. "I believe in God," he cried:

This only reason, courtly priest! I give.
Go, cease to moralise: learn first to live.

He himself was determined to live—to live his life according to his own lights, and his seventy-fourth birthday found him unrepentant of his creed, when he wrote his "Dying Speech of an Old Philosopher":

I strove with none, for none was worth my strife;
Nature I loved, and next to Nature, Art;
I warm'd both hands before the fire of Life;
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

From first to last, Landor remained an individualist. In his rebellion against authority, he shared none of Coleridge and Southey's idealistic views of pantisocracy, of a better and finer order of society; he never shed crocodile tears of sentimentality in sympathy with the great unwashed—on the contrary, he was a late survival of the eighteenth century in his attitude to the lower orders of society, accepting without thought of question that those born and bred in the serving class should naturally serve those of the ruling class. He rebelled against the success of mediocrity, furiously despising a social system which admitted

mediocre talent to situations of supreme authority in legislation, and a condition of culture which could mistake mediocre for true genius.

The incident which ended his college career was a peculiarly dangerous exploit in the course of a college "binge," which he afterwards related to Birch. A certain Leeds, "a man universally laughed at and despised," whose Tory opinions provided food for Landor's scorn, happened to be entertaining guests in rooms across the quadrangle on the same evening as Landor had a party to wine. Landor's friends apparently were drawn from the "bloods," who regarded contemptuously the "servitors and other raffs of every description" comprising Leeds's party, and the rival factions soon began exchanging compliments through the open windows. When the amusement was cut short by Leeds' closing his windows and shutters, Landor saw a chance of showing off. He had been out shooting and his gun lay at hand; when he proposed "to fire a volley" at the closed shutters, "it was thought a good trick"—just as his giving Dr. James's shilling to his fag had been "thought an heroic action" at Rugby.

> Accordingly I went into my bedroom and fired. Soon the president sent up a servant to inform me that Mr. Leeds had complained of a gun being fired from the room in which I entertained my company, but he could not tell by whom; so that he insisted on knowing from me, and making me liable to the punishment.

Immediately sobered, he realised that he might be sent down and what he might then expect from his father. In a panic he prevaricated, declaring that no gun had been fired from the room in which his company were, and since nobody was specifically charged, he did not feel it his duty to lend himself to the identification. Loyally his friends took the same line, but they were questioned separately and inevitable contradictions enabled the president to deduce the truth.

At this point Forster deliberately condensed the narrative to Landor's detriment. In Landor's letter there is no reference to any suggestion from the president that "Landor should enable

him to deal leniently by stating frankly what had occurred." Landor did, in fact, frankly confess on being found out. He was "extremely chagrined" by having thus humiliated himself; he wrote a frank confession to the president, "painted my dissimulation in the most odious colours. For being what I never was guilty of before, it struck me with the greatest horror." He explained that he had not dissembled from "personal fear," but because, "Tho' my father had really shown me as much unkindness as was in his power, I was resolved, if possible, not to give him any further cause of complaint." The president was sympathetic; discipline demanded punishment, and the sentence was rustication, but he handsomely wrote a letter intended to mollify his father and expressed the hope that Landor would return to the college after the period of probation.

Forster implies that the letter failed to produce the intended effect, that Dr. Landor raged and stung the son into defiance, and that, when Landor wrote to take his name off the college books, he concluded that he did not mean to return to Oxford, and, in Landor's words to Birch, "he used the most violent expressions," with the result that "I have left him for ever." But the college buttery books show that Landor went down in the week of 20th June 1794, while his name remained on the college books till 19th December, his caution money being refunded in February following. Something happened between June and December, of which Landor said nothing to Birch and which served further to irritate his father.

CHAPTER II

THE YOUTH OF BRILLIANT PROMISE

§ 1

On leaving Oxford, Landor spent part of the summer at the small seaside resort of Tenby in Wales. In *Dry Sticks* (1858) he published some verses on a "Voyage to St. Ives, Cornwall, from Port Einon, Glamorgan, 1794," and though, after so many years, his memory might forgivably have played him false in a date, he had reason to remember accurately in this case. For, at Tenby in that summer of 1794 he began a love affair with a golden-haired girl named Nancy Jones, whom he addressed in verse as Ione, the derivation of which name he afterwards explained.

> Sometimes, as boys will do, I play'd at love,
> Nor fear'd cold weather, nor withdrew in hot;
> And two who were my playmates at that hour,
> Hearing me call'd a poet, in some doubt
> Challenged me to adapt their names to song.
> Ione was the first; her name is heard
> Among the hills of Cambria, north and south,
> But there of shorter stature, like herself;
> I placed a comely vowel at its close,
> And drove an ugly sibilant away. . . .
> Ianthe, who came later, smiled and said,
> I have two names and will be praised in both;
> Sophia is not quite enough for me,
> And you have simply named it, and but once.
> Now call the other up. . . .

Eight years were yet to elapse before he met Ianthe, the principal inspiration of his muse and love of his life, but he may have met Nancy Jones as early as 1793, on a previous holiday at Tenby, for he himself dated the following lines as written in that year:

> "Tell me what means that sigh," Ione said,
> When on her shoulder I reclined my head;
> And I could only tell her that it meant
> The sigh that swells the bosom with content.

Whether he had previously met her or not, his amour with Nancy began in the summer of 1794, and had progressed far enough to excite his father's "violent expressions" when he took his name off the college books in December. Probably the old man upbraided him for philandering with rustic doxies instead of looking to his career; certainly there was more than revived vituperation over the shooting incident, which lay six months in the past, to cause Landor to leave his father "for ever."

On banging angrily out of his father's house, he took lodgings in London at Beaumont Street, Portland Place. Though the Savage estates of Ipsley and Tachbrook, as well as the Landor property at Rugeley, were bound to descend to him on his father's death, till then he had nothing beyond what his father chose to allow him, and since he was now likely to receive nothing from that source, he had to look for a means of livelihood. In a burst of zeal, whetted by rage against his father, he decided to launch his literary career with a volume of his verses, which appeared under the imprint of Cadell and Davies in the spring of 1795 as *The Poems of Walter Savage Landor.*

But while the poems were in the press, his old horror of criticism evidently recurred. At school and college he had avoided exposing himself to competition; now here he was displaying himself in black and white as a target for the caprice of critics. When, on 12th April, he sent a copy of the book to Walter

Birch (with the letter describing the Oxford shooting affair), he remarked that he was devoting all the profits to the benefit of a "distressed clergyman," but neither Forster nor other commentators have identified the indigent parson, and he was probably a myth created to supply a characteristic apology for condescending to print his poems. To his old schoolfellow he would not confess his hope of making money or reputation out of his verses, but forestalled possible adverse criticism by pretending to have capitalised graciously the scribblings of his leisure for a poor friend's benefit, assuming the same magnificent pose as when, at Rugby, he had not troubled to work "for myself, though I could get anyone else a shilling when I liked."

Probably there were not wanting the usual Jonahs to warn him of the precarious living to be gained from literature, and when his anger cooled, he became not a little worried about his position. His pride prevented him making a first move towards reconciliation with his father, but he guessed that his mother and eldest sister might work on his father's feelings, especially if they were inspired by a fear of his doing something rash. He therefore decided to play to their gallery, and took care that they heard of his avowed intention of leaving England to seek his fortune in Italy.

This device was suggested by correspondence with a girl whom he considered himself likely to marry. Dorothy Elizabeth Lyttelton was the heiress of Studley Castle, near Ipsley Court, where she lived with her two uncles. A close friend of Landor's sister Elizabeth, she may have entertained for him, as Forster thought, nothing more than "the friendly familiarity of a good-humoured girl for the brother of her friend, a year or two younger than herself, whose cleverness she admired and whose attentions pleased her," but in the light of the conventional restraint imposed on girls of Jane Austen's time, the letters quoted by Forster suggest that she gave him ample encouragement to suppose himself her favoured suitor. In his old age he recalled how Lady Hertford, "the best judge of beauty in

the world," called her "the most lovely and graceful creature she had ever known," and how he went "every day of the vacations" to Studley.

> It soon was *Walter* and *Dorothea;* her uncles, too, called me Walter, and liked me heartily; and if I had then been independent, I should have married this lovely girl.

Most likely he would, for the heir of Ipsley and Tachbrook was a suitable match for the Studley heiress, but he was for the present dependent on his father, and the events following his rustication from Oxford must have decided her uncles that such an erratic young man was likely to prove an unsatisfactory husband for their niece, who married, some months later, a member of the old Holyoake family.

To this girl, he wrote, soon after his arrival in London, of the quarrel with his father. She had been staying at Warwick, and in her reply assured him that talking about him was the only consolation for his absence, which had diminished the happiness of her visit. He had been the "constant theme" of the conversation with his sister Elizabeth, who was much distressed at the breach with his father and to whom she asks him to write. In her next letter she tells how he has charmed his sister by writing to her, "and me by the compliment of attending to my request," before proceeding to coquet, in the manner of *Pride and Prejudice*, about sending to him some coloured ribbons "to tie up for your watch-chain."

On the publication of his *Poems*, he sent her a copy of the book, with some manuscript verses addressed to herself; she sat up into the small hours reading them, and could not compose herself to sleep till she had told him what "exquisite delight" they had given her. How could she find words to thank him; ought she indeed to thank him for making her inordinately vain! "These verses, how could I talk of them! What I have, I can repeat as fluently as the author himself, and am longing for my memory to be farther charged."

If the writer of that letter did not wish the poet to believe that she felt tenderness for him and welcomed his advances, then she was a vain coquet, which the rest of her letters prove Dorothy Lyttelton not to have been. Blunt, managing, domineering, John Forster was notoriously insensitive to a hint; the invitations of many women, like the irony of many men, must have been wasted on him before he married in middle life the publisher Colburn's widow. But Landor was always a "ladies' man," from his boyhood at Ipsley when he kissed his sister's schoolgirl friends in the garden, to his extreme old age, when Robert Browning wrote, "Whatever he may profess, the thing he really loves is a pretty girl to talk nonsense with." With his excellent opinion of himself, he would have been surprised if a girl whom he sought out for his attentions did not seem only too ready to fall into his arms. He had already enjoyed some successes—some light o' love at Lutterworth in Rugby days, more recently the golden-haired beauty at Tenby. If he had not previously aspired to one so high as the rich and beautiful heiress, he so far outshone in attractions the average beau she met in Warwickshire society that she must have recognised as much.

Landor undoubtedly conceived that Dorothy Lyttelton, in the conventional phrase, was "not indifferent" to him, and he now capitalised the fact. He had misgivings about his *Poems* as soon as they were published. Whence he derived his income during these months in London does not appear; it is unlikely that his mother sent him anything without his father's permission, but his college refunded his caution money in February and probably he was still drawing on the allowance he had at Oxford. This might cease if he did not effect some arrangement with his father, and he had no liking for the grim prospect of a professional literary career. So he assumed the melodramatic pose of a tragic hero, and announced his intention of seeking fortune in Italy, guessing that Dorothy would be dismayed at the notion of his distant exile and would set about scheming to prevent it.

She swallowed the bait as he expected. He would say that she was determined to disapprove of all his schemes, but she was adamant against his going to Italy, or anywhere else as distant. Firm on that point, she proceeded with persuasive flattery; she did not "see why you should be so disgusted with people in general of your own country," and she "would have people with superior worth and abilities stay and distinguish themselves where example, in most wise and good things, is so much wanting." She then interested her uncles on his behalf, and was able to announce that "they talk of you much, and are ready to be mediators between you and your father." Will he tell her "on what terms and with what inducements you can be tempted to give up this voyage?"

Propose them to me, and I will commit them to my uncles, one of whom will make such proposals to your father as coming from themselves. I assure you they are bent upon restoring peace and content to you; and if they can serve you, *do* gratify their wish! Recollect in the course of nine months you will be of age. You will then have it in your power to increase your income if you do but approve of those only means to do it. *Till then,* suppose my uncle was to propose your going to Cambridge. And would you agree to giving a security to make amends to the younger part of the family if your father would allow you enough to support you in studying the law at the Temple, or living independent anywhere else in England? For I find the truth is, he cannot allow you sufficient to study the law without injuring his younger children. Three hundred a year my uncles talk of. Now this is really coming to the point. Not merely saying *don't go,* but thinking of what you are to do if you stay. Let me entreat you, then, to tell me the terms on which you will give up this melancholy scheme. Do lay them down to me, and I will acquaint my uncles of them. . . . Or, will you come down and stay a little while with them, and talk over schemes and projects to restore your happiness in England? I do hope you will take time to try if you do not find it *sufferable* to stay.

The correspondence concluded with this letter. Landor apparently behaved with neither gallantry nor gratitude. Forster says that "immediately after" he received this last letter—in late

April or early May of 1795—"he quitted London for Tenby in South Wales." Such an ungallant response to the invitation to stay under the same roof with the object of his professed adoration, for the purpose of discussing with her guardians ways and means "to restore your happiness in England," must have been received as a snub by any girl, even if she had not been a courted beauty. Possibly also her guardians, on going to intercede with his father, were informed of Landor's attraction to Tenby, and delicately warned their ward against the danger of settling her affections on him. So she not only ceased correspondence with him, but soon afterwards accepted the suit of Francis Holyoake, and though she lived at Studley till her early death in 1811 and remained a friend of Landor's family, there was no further intimate friendship with him.

Clearly Landor did not exaggerate, as Forster suggests, when he declared that "if I had then been independent, I should have married this lovely girl." Rather he made an under-statement; the obstacle was not his dependence, for his father must have been glad enough for him to make such a handsome match, after a suitable period of betrothal. The obstacle was evidently Nancy Jones. If Nancy had been the subject of his father's "violent expressions" which caused Landor to leave home, he must have foreseen that Dorothy's uncles would hear about her when they approached his father on his behalf. If he had sworn never to see Nancy again and vowed eternal constancy for the future, Dorothy would probably have bestowed gracious forgiveness. But there would have been unpleasantness, possibly a scene, certainly a period of uncomfortable probation. There was a chance, too, that she might spurn him—the lines to "Dorothea" in *Dry Sticks* credit her with "stately steps, commanding eye," and his pride recoiled from that possibility. In any case, there would be unpleasantness, and just as he acted on an impulse by prevaricating about the shooting incident to avoid unpleasantness, so he now acted by his sudden departure to Tenby.

Possibly he hardly realised then or afterwards how finally he

quashed his chances with Dorothy, for he clearly alludes to her in the lines, published in *Simonidea* (1806):

> Sweet was the maid who hail'd my early lay,
> And waited to receive my vow;
> But Love, blind Love—all hurry, for 'twas May,
> Slipt it—my stars! I know not how.

Perhaps he went to Tenby to break the news to Nancy that he could see no more of her, and Dorothy, hearing of the amour and conceiving that he had gone to dally with his mistress, flatly renounced him; perhaps his resolution was merely overcome by Nancy's tearful pleadings. But in weighing the balance between eventual marital possession of the heiress and present possession of a mistress's charms, the scales weighed on Nancy's side. His father and Dorothy's guardians would probably have required him to wait for marriage at least till he came of age, and meantime have persuaded him into a professional career; after marriage, he would have been finally fettered to the narrow family circles of Studley and Warwick. He was young, just testing the spread of his newly feathered wings. Nancy entailed no ties and demanded no promises; she offered illicit relations fitting the unconventional character of a poet and a rebel. Anyhow, he went to Tenby, and stayed.

Neither Forster nor Colvin attempted the task of identifying Landor's mistress among the vast clan of her name in South Wales. From his verses it appears that she was short of stature, had "quivering" golden hair, and died young, at least before he wrote the moving elegy in *Simonidea* (1806), beginning "And thou too, Nancy!—why should Heaven remove." His verses also suggest that she did not allow his passion long to languish unrequited; Forster, who knew more than he was prepared to print, remarked primly that his time at Tenby "could not in any prudent or worldly sense have been very profitable," and "a part of it, including a love adventure . . . , was probably also painful," adding, with a fine gesture of distaste, that "it is not necessary, however, that this should be dwelt upon."

Forster's respectability was impeccable, and his reticence must be duly applauded by all who keep their souls clothed as modestly as their bodies. But Landor's life shows that he was frequently disposed, not only to sacrifice, but to flout with scorn, respectable convention in the interests of inclination or honesty of purpose. Nancy Jones was fond and frail; Landor took advantage of her fondness and frailty, enjoyed many happy hours in her arms, and afterwards regretted nothing of his connection with her, except that such happiness as he had with her lay in the past.

Proof of this lay under Forster's hand, for his library contained Robert Landor's marked copy of the *Quarterly Review* for April 1865, which included an obituary article on Landor. The article quotes Landor's statement in the imaginary conversation with the Abbé Delille that his "prejudices in favor of ancient literature began to wear away on *Paradise Lost*," and how "even the great hexameter sounded to me tinkling when I had recited aloud in my solitary walks on the sea-shore the haughty appeal of Satan and the deep penitence of Eve." In the margin beside this passage Robert Landor wrote:

> He too should have repented then—having seduced a girl at Tenby the year before, with whom he lived at Swansea till the birth of a Child.

Discreetly Forster ignored the note, but his destructive executor, Whitwell Elwin, evidently never thought of looking for incriminating indiscretions in the pages of the periodical he himself edited, and allowed the volume to accompany the bequest to South Kensington Museum. There it was found by Mr. Robert H. Super, who proceeded to consult the Swansea parish register. There he found no registration of a birth in Landor's name, but the registers show interment of a nine months' old infant named Anne Jones on 9th May 1796, and of a twenty-two-year-old girl of the same name on 15th November 1801.

If this child was Landor's, it explains his sudden departure

from London for Tenby at the end of April 1795. If he heard from the girl whom he had seduced the previous autumn that she was *enceinte*, what could he do but go to see her? Probably nobody yet shared her secret, and she was in terror of the discovery by her lower-class, and therefore the more consciously respectable, parents. This would explain the otherwise unaccountable impulse which prompted his flight just as he was about to become reconciled with his father and the accepted suitor of an heiress. Despite all prudent considerations, common decency demanded that he should stand by the prospective mother of his child. Presumably there were irate parents to be faced, and after a scene, he took the girl away from Tenby and the pointing fingers of the villagers, and installed her in lodgings with himself at Swansea.

If Dorothy heard only a bowdlerised version of the Tenby affair, it was enough to close her correspondence with Landor. But she had incited her uncles to open negotiations with his father, who was persuaded to relax a little in his attitude to his son. However he detested the discomfort of the affair, he must have recognised that Landor acted with honour and courage in recklessly sacrificing everything to stand by the girl he had got into trouble. At least Landor was so far relieved of the anxious prospect of earning a living by his pen that he instructed his publishers to withdraw his *Poems* from circulation.

> Before I was twenty years of age I had imprudently sent into the world a volume of which I was soon ashamed. It everywhere met with as much commendation as was proper, and generally more. . . . So early in life I had not discovered the error into which we were drawn by the Wartons. I was then in raptures with what I now despise.

So he wrote five years later, in another suppressed work, the *Postscript to Gebir*. Knowing the *Poems* to be immature, he recoiled from the possibility of having his vanity wounded by future critical reference to the book. But while he withdrew the volume bearing his name, he was content to leave on the market

another little book, issued a few weeks after the *Poems* by the same publishers, which did not bear his name on the title-page. The clue to the authorship of a *Moral Epistle, Respectfully Dedicated to Earl Stanhope* is contained in the body of the poem:

> Parham! and Shippon! If each honor'd name
> Be not eternally preserv'd by Fame—
> Lie tranquil in your tombs; and say "Ye Powers
> Of Darkness! It is Landor's fault not ours."

The poem is a satire in the manner of Queen Anne's day, comparing the current vices of public life with the fancied virtues of the past, and fastening the responsibility for all evil on the harassed Pitt; the prose preface—condoling with the third Earl Stanhope, a noted radical, who presented in 1789 a congratulatory address to the National Assembly on "the recent glorious revolution" in France, on his possession of hereditary honours, which the historian Gaspey says were "not undervalued by the friends of equality"—reads almost like a parody of the laudatory dedications of Dryden and Congreve. Landor left this squib to enjoy its short splutter of life, guessing that it would soon be lost in the refuse of ephemeral lampoons; he never reprinted it, nor afterwards referred to it, and Forster discovered its existence only from a chance mention in a letter addressed to him at Tenby.

Negotiations with his father dragged on throughout the summer, which he spent at Tenby. As late as August, he was still hinting at his melodramatic threat to go to Italy, for that month his old nurse Molly Bird (*née* Perry) wrote to him at Tenby:

> Honred Sir, May Health and Happiness attend you, and may I live to see you at the Head of that Family who, next to a Husband, as my Best Affections. I hope the providence of God will direct you in Every thing, but, O Sir, I hope you will Never go a Broad. My hart shuders at the thout of your leaving England Least I shud see you no more.

Probably he never seriously considered Dorothy's suggestion that he should continue his academic career at Cambridge, and as he despised the law only less than the Church, the idea of reading at the Temple was also rejected. Madden, the editor of Lady Blessington's correspondence, started a story, copied in many of Landor's obituary notices, that Landor, on leaving Oxford, lived in London with his godfather, General Powell, who urged him to enter the army. Supposing him to have given this information to Madden, Forster cited the story as an instance of Landor's defective memory, and in refutation quoted a garrulous rigmarole from Robert Landor, stating that the general never lived in London, that Walter never lived with him there or anywhere else, and that the old soldier, in view of his godson's republican opinions, "would have thought him as well qualified for the chaplaincy" as a military commission. When Madden's book appeared, Landor himself wrote in the *Athenaeum* of 3rd March 1855:

> I never was under the care of my godfather, General Powell, in London, nor was he ever there while I was. Out of kindness to my father, an old friend, he told him he would give me a commission in the army if I would "abstain from sporting my republican opinions." My reply was, "No man shall ever tie my tongue; many thanks to the General." He made the offer to my next brother.

The statement tallies with his brother Robert's, except that the latter denies that the general offered Landor a commission. Probably the general, feeling the obligation of a godfather, did make the conditional offer, which was conveyed to Landor at Tenby by his father. There is less reason for doubting the accuracy of Landor's memory than of his brother Robert's, who was a boy of only fourteen in 1795.

The choice of a profession and the amount of an allowance were the bones of contention between father and son. The father considered that his son, though the heir to landed property, should qualify himself for a profession, as he himself had done; of literature he took the conventional worldly view as

an unprofitable pastime rather than a profession. Landor argued that, as the heir to an assured income, so far from having to waste his time pursuing a distasteful profession, he was luckily situated to be able to devote himself to literature without worrying about making money. Until his father's death admitted him to his inheritance, he had to depend on an allowance, and the difficulty here appears in Dorothy Lyttelton's letter—his father would not make an allowance calculated to injure his younger children.

His parents' view was just. As their eldest son would receive at his father's death the bulk of his estates, they felt it their duty to concentrate on providing for their younger children as well as possible. Obviously Dr. Landor endeavoured to save all he could from his annual income to be set aside for settlement by will on his younger children, and whatever allowance he made to Landor must diminish this provision. In his view, Landor should be content with the same allowance as his brothers till he succeeded to the estates; if he was not satisfied, he should enter a profession and augment his income on his own account.

Landor, on the other hand, resented the position of waiting to step into his father's shoes. The entail could not be altered; on his father's death, he was bound to inherit wealth, and it seemed to him unfair that he should be meanwhile compelled to be content with a pittance. This attitude laid him open to a righteously indignant charge of selfishness—did he, so much more fortunate than his brothers and sisters, wish to deplete the comparatively little provision their father was struggling to set aside for them?

The entail of the Savage estates of Ipsley and Tachbrook and of the Landor estate of Rugeley drove a wedge between Landor and his family. From birth he was brought up in consciousness of the fortune he was to inherit, which encouraged in him the growth of arrogance and independence of spirit. When his parents combated this spirit with upbraidings that he was selfish, inconsiderate, unfeeling, his brothers and sisters

accepted this view of him and felt a grievance against their eldest brother, so much more fortunate than themselves and yet ready to deprive them of the little they might have. Landor saw himself a martyr to injustice, which ever roused him to angry rebellion. He saw his parents' natural concern for their younger children as partiality, and felt himself denied his fair share of their affection; he conceived the grievance against him of his brothers and sisters to spring from the bitterness of jealousy and envy.

Thus early he was estranged from the rest of his family, and it illustrates the power in his personality for compelling affection that his brothers and sisters, though always regarding him with disapproval, retained for him a measure of fondness till the end of their lives.

§ 2

His father eventually agreed to allow him £150 a year; when it was spent, the parental home at Warwick would be open to him till his next payment fell due. For the next three years he lived on this principle—while his money lasted, he was at Swansea, and he went home to Warwick whenever his pockets were empty.

During his few months in London early in 1795, he "accepted no hospitalities, and received few visits," being "occupied in studying Italian, and in improving my knowledge of Greek." In the company of his Italian coach, Parachinetti, he met Alfieri, then residing in England with his mistress, the Countess of Albany, as a refugee from the French Revolution. Though great men met in youth always retain the stature of first admiring impressions, Landor's admiration for Alfieri—which long afterwards found expression when making him the hero of two imaginary conversations—intensified because he saw him as a pattern peculiarly suited for imitation by himself. Alfieri was a patrician, born, like Landor, the heir to wealth, who had dis-

dained the privileges and pleasures of his position to devote himself with dignity to republican ideals. He was also the lover of Bonnie Prince Charlie's widow, who, in the freshness of youth, had been sacrificed at nineteen to marriage with a sottish *roué* of fifty, lacking any assets apart from the accident of royal descent. Alfieri, like Byron after him, was a gifted hero of romance, and the admiration he inspired in this young man of twenty was assured of duration by a remark which Landor soon had reason to recognise as pregnant of foresight. When he spoke with enthusiasm of the French Revolution, Alfieri remarked:

> Sir, you are a very young man. You are yet to learn that nothing good ever came out of France, or ever will. The ferocious monsters are about to devour one another; and they can do nothing better. They have always been the curse of Italy; yet we too have fools among us who trust them.

It is not to be wondered at that Landor remembered this remark with respect when he saw the French, after the manner of peoples exhausted with the horror of bloody revolutions, forget their fervour for liberty, equality, and fraternity in a drunken worship of militarism under a ruthless dictatorship.

At Swansea, too, he obviously sought neither hospitality nor visits. With Nancy Jones as his recreation, he devoted himself to endless reading. His purpose, like De Quincey's a few years later, was to equip his intellect; though he avowed no settled aim like De Quincey, who hoped to evolve a great theory of human philosophy which would qualify him as a benefactor to mankind, he probably cherished more vaguely a similar ambition. Knowing that he had imposed on his tutors at Rugby and Oxford by superficial brilliance, he now seriously sought after the groundwork of genuine scholarship, improving his Greek to read Homer and Pindar. To Pindar he was probably led by his enthusiasm for Pope, wishing to judge for himself the merits of the poetic controversy which had ended in Pope's explosion of the fashion for the false Pindaric ode.

He looked back to this time as the happiest of his life, when, as he told Lady Blessington forty-four years later, he "did not exchange twelve sentences with men"—he says nothing of women or Nancy Jones.

> I lived among woods, which are now killed with copper works, and took my walk over sandy sea-coast deserts, then covered with low roses and thousands of nameless flowers and plants, trodden by the naked feet of the Welsh peasantry, and trackless.

In his pursuit of the simple life he excluded the conventional pose of enjoying hobnobbing with the working-class folk; the Welsh peasants "were somewhat between me and the animals, and were as useful to the landscape as masses of weed or stranded boats." With all his republican zeal, he professed none of the fashionable democrat's pleasure in condescending to the proletariat; one of the virtues of his arrogance was his honesty, and he disdained to profess what he did not feel. On one of these walks along the beach at Swansea he met with the realisation that women might inspire a diviner fire than he had known in the sensuous charms of Nancy Jones. In the verses called "St. Clair," dated 5th October 1796, he describes his first meeting with Rose Aylmer—how, on seeing her, he found "my courage, voice, and memory gone," and after his first walk by her side,

> When all but lovers long had slept,
> I tost and tumbled, fretted, wept,
> To Love himself vow'd endless hate,
> Renounced my stars and curst my fate.

The fifth Lord Aylmer was about the same age as Landor, and they may have met at Oxford, but Landor had not previously met his sister Rose before their encounter in the autumn of 1796 on the beach at Swansea, where the Aylmers were then living. Long afterwards to her younger sister, Mrs. Paynter, Landor denied that he "ever offered a word of love" to Rose Aylmer, but on the other hand he told his niece that "I was not

indifferent to Rose, nor Rose quite to me," and Mrs. Paynter's daughter, Landor's "second Rose," believed her aunt to have been "his first love." Both his statements were probably true. Rose Aylmer, described in her obituary notice as "a young lady of great beauty and accomplishments," was only seventeen when he met her, and Landor, who had been living more or less openly with a mistress, was in no position to make honourable advances. Without her brother's formal permission to pay his addresses, he could not offer words of love, but he probably showed his attraction, waxing sentimental as was his instinctive habit with women, and since she welcomed his company, he had reason to suppose that she was not "indifferent" to him. Their acquaintance lasted only eighteen months, for in the summer of 1798 Rose accompanied her aunt, the wife of Sir Henry Russell, when she went out to India to join her husband, a Bengal judge. There she died of cholera in March 1800, and the news of her death inspired Landor to write the best-known lines of all his verse—lines in which Charles Lamb found "a charm I cannot explain," which he was forever muttering, "both tipsy and sober," and which find a place in every representative anthology of English poetry—

> Ah! what avails the sceptred race!
> Ah! what the form divine!
> What every virtue, every grace!
> Rose Aylmer, all were thine.
> Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
> May weep but never see,
> A night of memories and of sighs
> I consecrate to thee.

During the eighteen months following their meeting, Landor continued to live mostly at Swansea. Probably Nancy Jones found him a little peevish about this time; his idyll with her seemed tarnished in the light of his purer flame, and though a packet of golden hair was found in his desk after his death, it was not of Ione's "golden hairs once mingled with my own,"

but inscribed "Rose Aylmer's hair" and had been given to him as a sentimental treasure by Rose's sister. If Robert Landor's note may be taken as literally accurate and the infant Anne Jones was Landor's child, he had evidently ceased to live with Nancy when he met Rose.

It is not likely that a girl of seventeen, schooled in polite society of Miss Austen's era, offered much intellectual inspiration, or even had such feminine art as the more mature Dorothy to exclaim convincingly in rapture at his verses. If she had, he would have hastened to oblige her as he obliged Dorothy, and the only verses he addressed to her before her death were four lines of doggerel which he presented, not to her, but to a married lady in the house. The occasion was when she cut a piece from her bonnet ribbon; Landor picked it up, said "it was too precious to be lost, or for anyone to possess it without a contest," and drew lots for it with the other callow youths present. On such terms of romantic gallantry, he took his walks with her, and their talk was much as Miss Austen might have reported.

But Rose Aylmer did indirectly inspire the poem on which Landor's literary reputation with his contemporaries was based. She subscribed to the Swansea circulating library, and one day lent him *The Progress of Romance* by Clara Reeve, who then rivalled Mrs. Radcliffe as the most popular of lady novelists. From one of the stories in this book Landor took the idea for his epic poem, *Gebir*.

Since Langley first fired the enthusiasm at Ashbourne, Pope had reigned supreme for Landor as a model, and Pope had led him to Pindar, and his diligent study of Greek to Homer and Sophocles. Probably Homer led him to read Milton, with a view to measuring the greatest English epic beside the *Iliad*, and both Pope and the Greeks were at once unseated from their thrones in his estimation. The majesty of Milton was bound to appeal to Landor, for when he came to write the prose which comprises his principal bequest to posterity, his aim and achievement was the ideal dignity of language. There have been critics

of *Gebir*, forgetful that Milton took his story from the Bible and that William Shakespeare had been no mean exponent of blank verse, who have gibed at Landor for stealing his story and mimicking Milton in its telling. But the end here justifies the means, for *Gebir* remains one of the few epics of the eighteenth century to be reckoned fit to walk the same street down which Milton drove his chariot.

The plot follows the same lines as a heroic tragedy of the Restoration stage. A Spanish prince, Gebir, (of Gibraltar), invades the lands of the young Egyptian queen, Charoba, who is advised by her nurse Dalica (whose name is pronounced as a dactyl) to entertain the invader with blandishments. At their interview the couple fall in love, but Dalica mistakes her queen's emotions

> And wonders why she trembles, nor suspects
> How Fear and Love assume each other's form.

Bent on securing the queen's deliverance, Dalica visits a sorceress, who gives her a poisoned mantle. This she contrives to throw upon Gebir's shoulders during the ceremony of his marriage with Charoba, and he dies in the arms of his anguished bride.

As in the conventional heroic tragedy, there is an under-plot. Gebir's brother Tamar loves a valiant nymph, who defeats him in a wrestling match. Disguised as Tamar, Gebir wrestles with the nymph, beats her and gives her to Tamar in marriage. After their wedding, which precedes Gebir's, the nymph feels foreboding of evil and persuades Tamar to flee with her for safety beyond the seas. As he looks back in farewell towards the "rock of Iberia," the nymph rallies him:

> Fickle man
> Would not be happy could he not regret!
> And I confess how, looking back, a thought
> Has tŏucht and tun'd or rather thrill'd my heart,
> Too soft for sorrow and too strong for joy:

Fond foolish maid, 'twas with mine own accord
It sooth'd me, shook me, melted, drown'd, in tears.
But weep not thou; what cause hast thou to weep?
Wouldst thou thy country? would'st those caves abborr'd,
Dungeons and portals that exclude the day?
Gebir, tho' generous, just, humane, inhaled
Rank venom from these mansions. Rest, O King
In Egypt thou! nor, Tamar! pant for sway.
With horrid chorus, Pain, Diseases, Death,
Stamp on the slippery pavement of the proud,
And ring their sounding emptiness thro' earth.
Possess the ocean, me, thyself, and Peace.

These lines lack the chiselled imagery of the poem's more splendid passages, but they possess remarkable biographical significance. It is odd to find a young man of twenty-three extolling the serenity of voluntary retirement from competition in worldly affairs, odder still in one generally credited with exceptional intellectual gifts, and the heir to a fortune calculated to facilitate the pursuit of ambition. It is conveniently easy to say that Landor was an eccentric, and because his life followed no ordered plan, that he never conceived one for it. Yet plain facts prove that, when he decided upon a design, he pursued it steadfastly, in defiance of all adverse circumstances, just as he preserved to the end of his long life in the teeth of argument and against the balance of popular sentiment, the opinions he formed in his early years. Forster conceived that in these years he was afflicted with the Wertherism which preceded as the fashionable pose of youth the Byronism of the next generation. Actually it seems that, against his conscience, he was already infected with the inclination to a retreat of solitude, such as Wordsworth embraced as soon as he had the means and De Quincey defined as one of the "constituents of happiness" and essentials to his plan of cultivating a perfect intellect.

He pandered to this inclination in his stays at Swansea, but his conscience agreed with the urging of his friends and relatives that a young man of his advantages should be more actively engaged than in literary studies and poetical composi-

tion. Throughout his life he declined to regard literature as a profession; for him it was always the hobby of the cultured amateur. He shared the feeling expressed by Stevenson when he said regretfully that he "ought to have been able to build lighthouses and write *David Balfours* too"—that literature was not a whole time job for a first class intellect. It was not merely arrogance, but with some bitterness of self-reproach, that he described *Gebir* in its preface as "the fruit of Idleness and Ignorance; for had I been a botanist or a mineralogist, it had never been written."

It was not only his explosive father who besought him to employ his talents usefully. At Hatton, four miles from Warwick on the Birmingham road, Dr. Samuel Parr lived at the parsonage, where he accumulated a vast library which was the wonder and envy of contemporary scholars. In appearance and personality Parr sufficiently resembled Dr. Johnson to invite comparison with him; both were big and corpulent, both affected oddities of dress and manner, both cultivated a reputation for assertive dogmatism and outspoken opinionativeness. Today Parr survives only by Boswell's occasional references to him in the *Life* of Johnson and by De Quincey's essay on him, for though his importance was such as to invite two two-volume biographies immediately after his death, neither biographer was a Boswell. Yet while he was regarded, being a generation younger, as more or less Johnson's successor as a singular intellectual personality, most contemporaries would have rated him of greater gifts than Johnson. He was infinitely more popular, for by contrast with Johnson's irascibility, studied rudeness, and uncouth habits, Parr was genial, affable, and courtly of manners. He was a finer scholar—he used to say, "The first Greek scholar is Porson, and the third Elmsley; I won't say who the second is."—and he wielded an influence in politics to which Johnson never pretended. His home at Hatton was a shrine for pilgrimage by all the most distinguished men of the day; to have enjoyed his generous hospitality was a pleasure to remember and a privilege to be prized. His visitors were so numerous that,

shortly after his death, there were lamentations locally about the decrease in revenue from turnpike tolls.

Like Johnson, Parr was born to modest circumstances, being the only son of a Harrow apothecary. He won a scholarship at Harrow, where, after going to Cambridge, he returned as head assistant master. His scholarship and personality were highly valued by the headmaster, Dr. Sumner, and on Sumner's death, Parr was generally expected to be appointed his successor. But Sumner as a schoolmaster had been in advance of his time, being a fine scholar and a just disciplinarian, and the school governors, preferring a master who would make them less uncomfortably conscious of their intellectual and moral inferiority, declined to appoint a successor of his training. As Parr was only twenty-four at the time, they gave as an excuse for his rejection that he was too young. He took care that his youth should not again prove a handicap to his advantage by making himself seem much older than his years; he affected the dress and manners of an elderly ecclesiastic, and took to wearing the huge "obumbrating" wig, which became the hackneyed butt of political lampoons and would have delighted the caricaturists of a later age. So successfully did he assume a prematurely venerable appearance that his schoolfellow, Sir William Jones, the orientalist, told him that "if you should have the good luck to live forty years, you may stand a chance of overtaking your face."

Parr replied to the school governors with characteristic spirit; he resigned his post at Harrow and started a school on his own account at the neighbouring village of Stanmore. Already he had acquired such esteem as a pedagogue that forty boys were immediately removed from Harrow to continue under his charge. For a further fifteen years he remained a schoolmaster, but in spite of his exceptional abilities, he made little headway in his profession, and it was due only to the urgent recommendation of Dr. Johnson that he secured the headmastership of Norwich Grammar School. Preferment went by patronage, and Parr not only disdained the lip-service demanded by wealthy patrons, but caused them to regard him

with disfavour as a dangerous man by giving free vent to enlightened opinions. His ready eloquence won him popularity as a preacher, but he forfeited all chance of church preferment by his open profession of a liberal Christianity quite foreign to ecclesiastical convention. Instead of courting the fat canons of the cathedral at Norwich, he consorted freely with dissenters, like Dr. John Taylor, and voiced violent indignation against the persecution of the Catholics.

"Alas for our church!" he said boldly. "Formerly she was the mother of all sects, now she is sectarian herself; embittered with the same spite and animosity to the sects, which the sects feel towards one another." And with a truth as applicable any time during the succeeding hundred and fifty years, he declared the Church's short-sighted policy to be "as degrading to our dignity as weakening to our strength."

He owed the gift of the perpetual curacy of Hatton to the gratitude of Jane Lady Trafford for his capable tutoring of her only son, and when he gave up schoolmastering in 1786 to live there in retirement, he took in private pupils. When Landor was removed from Rugby, there may have been no vacancy at Parr's, for he limited the number of his pupils to seven and there was keen competition for a place. But it is unlikely that Landor's father applied to Parr. Before the French Revolution Dr. Landor was a Whig so zealous that he played a leading part in sponsoring the candidature of Ladbroke and Sir Robert Lawley at the election which first exploded Lord Warwick's dominion over Warwickshire politics. But on hearing of the horrors of revolutionary Paris, he was one of the deserting Whigs who followed Edmund Burke into the Tory camp, and probably shared the popular suspicion of Parr as a dangerous firebrand, which was fanned to such unreasoning prejudice by his enthusiastic support of Charles James Fox that his pupils were removed from his charge by their parents.

Moreover, Parr was hardly the best possible tutor for a boy removed from a school for insubordination, though he seems to have been far in advance of his time as one of the finest type

of modern schoolmasters. He made friends of his boys, delighting to mix freely with them in their playtime hours; he would spend hours in the sun, puffing his eternal pipe, and watching a cricket match, and he made a practice of inviting his elder boys to dinner when he had distinguished guests. They never presumed to familiarity from his freedom with them, for in school he was a strict disciplinarian, and by his equal zest in work and play, won their affection and respect. But he admired spirit in boys; he believed in the sound theory that, if bad blood sprang up between boys, the best way of having it out was by fighting. He shocked one of his biographers, the Rev. William Field, by gleefully relating how, at Stanmore, there was a tacit agreement between him and his pupils that all fights should be staged at a certain spot in full view of his study window; he watched, and the boys knew that he watched, but it was mutually understood that he was supposed to be ignorant of the happenings.

Parr would have admired and encouraged Landor's rebellious independence, instead of administering the chastening effect vainly hoped for by Dr. Landor. When they met during Landor's Oxford days, Parr inspired in him the affection and respect he rarely failed to win from his juniors, and quick to recognise talent above the ordinary, he made a favourite of him. Sydney Smith declared that Parr, in his rural retreat, had too few opportunities of entertaining his intellectual equals, and so developed a taste for scoring too easily off inferior wits. But Boswell records Johnson as saying, "Parr is a fair man. I do not know when I have had an occasion of such free controversy." In Landor, Parr found a foeman worthy of his powers; they shared a cultured taste for the classics, the same revolutionary political opinions, and Landor exceeded even Parr's violence in the heat of argument.

Robert Landor believed that the pair "were kept from quarrels by mutual respect, by something like awe of each other's temper, and a knowledge that, if war began at all, it must be to the knife." But Robert was not an unprejudiced judge of their relations; he disliked Parr, who once treated him "more offen-

sively than any one else ever did," an offence which he avenged by attacking him in a lampoon wrongly attributed to his elder brother. There was the same mutual respect between Parr and Landor as between him and Johnson. The style of their arguments must have taken the same tone as that which Parr described between himself and Johnson.

" I gave him no quarter. . . . Dr. Johnson was very great. Whilst he was arguing, I observed that he stamped. Upon this, I stamped. Dr. Johnson said, Why did you stamp, Dr. Parr?—I replied, Because you stamped; and I was resolved not to give you the advantage even of a *stamp* in the argument."

Between Parr and Landor, there must have been much stamping, but neither was of the kind which quarrels over controversy. Everybody who knew Parr well agreed that, while he was violently opinionated and loved to lay down the law, he exuded good humour and charmed by his courtliness. In these days Landor, always impetuous and explosive, lacked the polished courtesy of his latter years, but Parr engaged his life-long respect and gratitude by admitting him to argument as an intellectual equal and delighting in the violence which others of his elders rebuked as a defect and a danger. In the latter phase of his life, when lionised as an eccentric genius, Landor consciously or unconsciously assumed many of Parr's characteristics.

Parr was twenty-eight years older than Landor, but the warmth of his feeling for the young man is illustrated in the anecdote which Landor proudly told in affectionate reminiscence. Parr had one of his hospitable dinner-parties when one of the guests remarked that Landor had just arrived at Warwick, after a long absence, on a visit to his mother.

"Eat your dinner, eat your dinner," said Parr.

But as soon as the cloth was removed and the first glass of wine drunk, he laid down his pipe and said:

"Drink your wine, my friends, drink your wine; I must go and see Walter Landor."

He drove off and spent an hour with Landor, though his sense of courtesy made him decline even the offer of a cup of tea.

"No, no, Walter," he said. "I must go back to my friends; they are all at dinner."

Relating this story, Landor used to boast proudly that he was the only man for whom Parr had ever ridden half a dozen miles "with his dinner in his mouth and his pipe out of it." This was the sort of distinction which Landor always valued beyond any other. He cared so little for the praise of reviewers and the consequently possible popularity with the public that he allowed most of his works to be published by insignificant provincial booksellers, whose wares rarely wandered to any shop-window but their own; he never sought any public distinction, and disliked dining in the company of more than a few personal friends. Above everything he valued the affection and esteem of those for whom he himself felt the same regard, and if he measured satisfaction by the number of marks of devoted friendship he received during his long career, he might well have echoed Hazlitt's death-bed comment, "Well, I've had a happy life."

He sent a copy of *Gebir* to Parr, assuring him, with the classical allusion that Parr loved, that, under his criticism, he would feel like Polydorus when his tomb, "new-turfed and spruce and flourishing," was plucked as a sacrifice to Aeneas. But, as Landor once told Southey, Parr's taste in poetry was "Bromwychian," and he was much concerned that his young friend should be wasting his gifts on such dilettanteism when there was useful work for an able pen. Landor declined to allow Parr's biographer to publish his letters to Parr—he explained to one of his sisters that they were "merely notes, and of all the letter writers in the universe I am the most negligent and the very worst"—and Parr's letters to Landor appear to have been among those papers of Forster's destroyed by Whitwell Elwin, but Parr evidently urged Landor continually to leave his Welsh retreat for London and play a part in party politics.

Parr gave him an introduction to Daniel Stuart, the proprietor and editor of the *Morning Post*, which advocated more extreme views than Perry's *Morning Chronicle*, the orthodox Whig organ, and to Robert Adair, Fox's party organiser, who became British ambassador at Vienna, and though a year or two older than Landor, died a year after he did. Over his own name or a pseudonym he contributed occasional letters after the manner of Junius, to the *Morning Post*, and after 1799, when Stuart acquired the *Courier*, to that paper. Adair found him an untractable satellite. Unlike Coleridge and Southey, then employed on similar work, Landor was independent of the beggarly pay of the professional journalist, and he wrote as his conscience dictated, regardless of editorial or party requirements. His diatribes against "the drunken democracy of Mr. William Pitt" were welcomed, but too often he strayed from the paths approved by the party machine. It happened also that Stuart's health began to fail and the control of the *Courier* came more into the hands of his partner, Peter Street, who gradually watered down the acid of the paper's tone, till it became eventually, in the years before Waterloo, the leading Government newspaper. Hence Adair found himself often obliged to find excuses in the face of Landor's furious indignation when a letter of his was "edited" or omitted altogether.

Adair cultivated him for six or seven years; they corresponded from 1800 to 1806. For Landor was a young man of gifts who might have been useful as a member of Parliament in opposition, and he would also be a man of fortune, well equipped with the money and consequent influence necessary to secure himself a seat. So Adair made frequent appointments to meet him at Debrett's in Piccadilly, whence they went together to the House of Commons, which Landor dubbed "the most costly exhibition in Europe." In Adair's company, he once heard Sheridan, Pitt, Fox, and Burke speak at one sitting.

> Pitt had a magnificent voice. Fox screeched and screamed. Sheridan was splendid. But Burke was the finest of all—yet with the

House quite inattentive. Somebody said "There gets up that great fool, Wilberforce"—and he was a very mild-spoken man.

He was enabled to command a seat in the reporters' gallery when he liked, and it seemed that he had only to write a few trenchant letters to the press, and allow Adair to introduce him to the leading Whig politicians, before he took his place on the floor of the House and pursued the career for which his position as a country gentleman of fortune fitted him.

Such a career, as Parr commended, seemed perfectly suited to Landor's tastes and abilities. In Parliament he could have vented his advanced views on enlightened democracy, and satisfied his conscience with the knowledge that he was working honestly in the interest of his beliefs. During the vacations, he would have had ample leisure for the business of his estate and for indulging his taste for poety and classical study—even for writing a history of England in Latin, which Parr suggested as a labour of love!

But all this would have entailed a settled order of routine and an apportioned division of his interests, of which he was temperamentally incapable. He always obeyed the impulse of the moment, and just as impulse prompted his comings and goings at a moment's notice, so when something took his fancy, he concentrated all his tempestuous energy in its pursuit, careless of other interests demanding his attention. Want of money invariably sent him to Warwick; as soon as he had his pockets lined, he would be off, either to London at the behest of conscience, or to Tenby from inclination. And he was likely to move just as impetuously between London and Tenby or some other haunt, according to whether his conscience or inclination was uppermost. Much of his correspondence bears a re-directed address; it is common to find a letter to him with two or three different postmarks.

During the four years following the publication of *Gebir*, he was much in London. He met neither Coleridge nor Southey, because their struggling circumstances did not admit them to

the society which welcomed a gifted young man of fortune, armed with introductions from Dr. Parr. He often met Sir James Mackintosh, then in close correspondence with Parr, and formed a poor opinion of his scholarship when, one morning at breakfast with Parr in London, Mackintosh spoke of *anabáses.*

"Very right, Jemmy! very right!" chuckled Parr delightedly. "It is *anabásis* with you, but anábasis with me and Walter Landor."

At the same breakfast were a pupil of Parr's named Hargrave, and Joseph Jekyl, one of the most celebrated wits and men about town of the generation between Selwyn and Theodore Hook. Landor "went at that time into very grand company," and when he returned to Warwick with empty pockets, his family sneered at his fraternising with fashionable society. Some of them who wanted "to put him down," once said:

"Well, we hear you know Tom Paine—Citizen Paine we suppose you call him with your ideas."

"To persons with *your* ideas," replied Landor, "I call him *Mister* Paine."

He met Tom Paine at a dinner, "his face blotched and his hand unsteady with the wine he took." When the host had given him a glass of brandy, "he talked very well; an acute reasoner, in fact a monstrous clever man." He met Mrs. Siddons "once or twice" at the house of the last Duchess of Ancaster; she was "a mighty pompous woman, mighty pompous—but wonderful on the stage." He knew her notoriously pompous brother, John Philip Kemble, who ruled the London stage with majesty uninspired by genius, between Garrick and Kean. To Kemble he owed an acquaintance with the great French actor, Talma, with whom he had a discussion of dramatic poetry so remarkable that, more than twenty years later, he incorporated his memories of it in his imaginary conversation with the Abbé Delille, whom he also met at this time as a political refugee from France. To Talma he declared that "he didn't see how they managed in France to break the necks of all their verses so well,

and that French poetry had a villainous metre!" Even if he knew that Talma was a fervent admirer of Shakespeare and outspoken in his preference for English blank verse to the French rhymed tragedy, the expression of this opinion to the distinguished Frenchman lacked the courtesy for which Landor was universally admired in later life; it was characteristic of the blunt and violent manner of asserting his opinions which he practised in his youth, careless of whether he gave offence. His disregard of other people's feelings finds illustration in an anecdote he related against himself. The Landors' old housekeeper at Warwick fell ill, and when his sister Elizabeth asked her what was wrong, the old lady replied, "Oh Lord, I've got such a beating of the heart, Miss, that I can hear it the other side of the room." Landor laughed his uproarious laugh when his sister told him this, and asked "How could you keep from laughing?" "Why," replied his sister, "I did almost laugh out, but I don't always laugh in people's faces, as you do, Walter."

Though so careless of others' feelings, he was himself as touchy as an old woman. He once jumped up from Parr's table at a fancied offence from a fellow guest, who was astonished at the effect of his remark, which expressed no more than a difference of opinion. To rouse him "some slight interruption, even a smile, was provocation enough," said Robert Landor, "if there were many witnesses present at the controversy." His arrogance frequently took a form of intolerable insolence. As late as 1812, he told Southey, "At Parr's I converse only with Parr." Apparently he would sit in silence while Parr conversed with other guests, making them uncomfortably conscious of the aloof contempt he felt for them and their opinions, and when Parr addressed him in the hope of drawing him into general conversation, he flattered his vanity by luring Parr into a discussion of politics or classics above the heads of the others present. The Rev. Robert Fellowes, said Landor, was "a person I often met at Parr's," yet he avowed that "I never exchanged a syllable with him." Though Fellowes subsequently achieved questionable notoriety by political intrigue and his relations

with a celebrated adventuress, he was at this time a hard working country curate, who won Parr's friendship and esteem by his sedulous attention to his duties. But he had a scanty income, small hopes of preferment, and probably paid grateful deference to Parr, so Landor, violently contemptuous of everything and everybody connected with the Church, despised him as an insignificant dog of a parson. It emphasises the high value he set upon Landor that the genial Parr tolerated such discourtesy to his guests and disregard for his feelings as a host.

Confiding to Walter Birch in 1819 his plans for his son's education, Landor declared his intentions of keeping him "always among women, that he may be desirous of pleasing, and learn a gracefulness and ease of manners which few Englishmen, educated in England, can acquire." For, he said, "I remember the grossness and repulsiveness of my own manners, and am conscious how much I still retain of those truly British qualities." The courtly old gentleman who frequented the Gore House *salon* of 1840 must have recalled distastefully many boorish acts of his youth. Even his chivalry bore marks of tarnish. Anna Seward, "the Swan of Lichfield," reigned in queenly sway over literate society in Staffordshire, and the Landor family attended her court when visiting their Landor cousins at Rugeley. She had praised some verse written by Landor when he was seventeen, and when *Gebir* appeared, showed readiness to lionise the author. But Landor flatly refused to meet her, in the company of either his father or his aunts. Truly she was a tiresome bore, but Walter Scott thought well enough of her to perform as a pious duty, after her death in 1809, the editing of her feeble poems and her prosy, pretentious letters to himself and other literary men. She was, moreover, an elderly lady and a valued friend of his parents. But the mere fact that she was a friend of his family, whom Landor always touchily suspected of wanting to "put him down," was enough to rouse his scornful rudeness, and he sneered that he "preferred a pretty woman to a literary one." She heard of the remark, and wreaked feline revenge by writing to a correspondent that only the

author of such a poem as *Gebir* could have written the one favourable notice of it in the *Critical Review*. When the letter duly came to light in her published correspondence, Landor exclaimed angrily that he was not surprised she preferred his juvenile poetical effusions to *Gebir*—"they were more like her own."

Intellectually precocious from childhood, in manners he matured slowly. Throughout the first decade of his manhood, he remained very much the *enfant terrible* he had been at school and college. When he found himself remarkable for his arrogance, his violent extravagance, and his impulsive outspokenness, he cultivated these qualities as a pose, and society sharing the habit of sheep, the majority received him at the valuation accepted by a few friends like Parr. Major Tickell, a descendant of the former laureate and friend of Addison, once wondered that Landor should have lived so long.

> We were occasional guests [he said] at the same public table at Bath two winters, where there were other military men; and if I had talked as he talked, there would have been half a dozen bullets through my body if the first five had been insufficient.

Violent as he was, the fact that Landor apparently never received a challenge in those days of duelling emphasises the force of his personality. People meeting him were told: "You mustn't mind Landor. He's an odd fellow—writes poetry and all that you know. But he's a clever devil—could do anything if he wanted to. And, if you swallow his oddities, he's a very good chap—his people have two or three big places Warwick way." Army officers with nothing but their pay could swallow anything from an heir to big estates, especially when he was as prodigally lavish as Landor. And as he acted up to his advertised character in personal oddities, so, when he found that he was courted as the heir to wealth, he added that part to his pose. He cultivated a magnificent contempt for money, for which that useful commodity took ample revenge by becoming the plague of his life.

With all his oddities, he never failed to make friends. There was at least one person with whom he condescended to converse at Parr's, besides Parr. Bertie Greatheed, the wealthy owner of Guy's Cliff, near Warwick, was a generation older than Landor, and highly valued by Parr as a man of considerable parts. He wrote a play called *The Regent*, successfully produced at Drury Lane with Mrs. Siddons in the lead, but George III had one of his mental lapses at the time, compelling Pitt to bring in a regency bill, which created so much public agitation that the theatre management felt it prudent to withdraw a play with such a title and subject. He possessed advanced liberal opinions. Devoutly religious, he supported the established church, but earnestly advocated tolerance, including emancipation for the Catholics; in politics, he was an extreme radical, professing views which recommended him to Landor. Apparently he had a high opinion of his own importance locally, for Landor wrote in 1802 to correct his brother Henry's "wrong opinion of Mr. Greatheed":

> He is vain, but he is not corrupt. He has a sense of glory and a certain pride, which may make him wish to seem the rival of Lord Warwick, but would not suffer him to be the tool or even the co-partner. He is vext and he *sulks*, that is all. He could not be so silly as to imagine that Lord Warwick would bring him in. On a suspicion of such a wish, all those friends whose assistance must at last do the business, would revolt against him.

Landor's brother Henry shared his political interest at this time, and it was through Henry that Landor made a friend of James Rough, a young barrister who, on being appointed to the midland circuit, was given letters of introduction by Henry to his family and to Dr. Lambe, the successor to Dr. Landor in his medical practice. Rough appears to have been a volatile individual, bursting with energy, equipped with no little talent and bent on making the most of it, knowing something of everything and everybody. Robert Landor said "he never met with anyone who had so little reserve"; within an hour of their

first meeting, Rough had made him "acquainted with all his prospects, literary and professional." Talkative and sanguine, he was a bit of a bounder, but no fool; he failed to scale the heights of the legal profession because he possessed too little sycophancy and too frank a sense of humour. When he had to prosecute at the petty sessions a thief who had stolen a drake, he persisted in calling the bird a duck, though it was pointed out to him by a weighty legal mind that there was the same difference as between a bull and a cow. This, said Robert Landor sententiously, was "characteristic both of Rough's habits and of his future fortune." He was always going to do something big, but he enjoyed life too thoroughly to find time for the concentration essential to success,—he was always "so busy that he did nothing."

Though he "did equal justice to his own," Rough gave "ample credit to the pretensions of other people," and he readily recognised Landor's gifts. He was an "intense admirer" of *Gebir*, and wrote a tragedy, *The Conspiracy of Gowrie*, which Southey considered a "manifest imitation" of Landor's poem. "My brother," remarked Robert Landor sourly, "repaid his admiration, for in such duties he was never ungrateful. Hence this very ardent friendship. . . ." For three or four years they were boon companions; they shared the same political views as well as literary tastes, and before his marriage with an illegitimate daughter of the demagogue John Wilkes—"attracted by the father's celebrity than the daughter's beauty," according to the Rev. Robert—Rough also shared Landor's extravagance and susceptibility to gallantry. He once proposed to travel a hundred miles by stage-coach to a Christmas ball for the pleasure of dancing with Dr. Parr's daughter, whom he had never seen. On his marriage he wrote affectionately to Landor, assuring him that his wife was "fully disposed to welcome you as the most valued of her husband's friends." But their friendship came abruptly to an end after about four years, in 1802. According to the unreliable authority of Robert Landor, Rough either "smiled at a false argument" or cut him short in the

presence of others, and Landor, immediately leaving the house, flatly renounced their acquaintance. But something more must have happened of which the younger brother knew nothing, for twenty-six years later, when his sister Ellen had written him news of Rough, Landor wrote:

> As for that impostor Rough, I never hear the fellow mentioned without some fresh contempt. My friend, Sir Charles Wentworth was at school with him, and related to me many anecdotes of his shabbiness and cowardice. However, if he had continued to cultivate poetry, instead of those thistles called law, he would have been perhaps the best poet of the age.

While the friendship lasted, Rough, having the advantage of a slight seniority in years and experience, wielded considerable influence over Landor, and while he evidently encouraged his extravagances, his counsel was not always bad. In May 1801, when Landor had vented one of his moods of despondence, excited by his dissatisfaction with his negative career, Rough rallied him robustly:

> Come, come, rouse yourself and write. If you must die, it is at least your duty to leave something behind you; and though *Gebir* will do much, yet I am persuaded it is in your power to do still more. Literature, like other things, as often obtains the reward of praise by quantity as quality; and we are all of us so little important to others, that unless we put them in mind of us daily, we shall scarcely avoid being forgotten.

Rough's worldly wisdom, forestalling by a century the golden age of cheap advertisement, reflected shrewd criticism of Landor. Forster waxed righteously indignant against De Quincey for "conceiting" himself to be the "sole purchaser and reader" of *Gebir*, but De Quincey had reason enough, for outside a small circle of the intelligentsia, he might have searched half the counties of England for another person who had heard of the poem within four years of its publication. *Gebir* had better fortune than most fledgeling efforts of unknown poets, for it

received one notice in terms of the highest praise—from an anonymous writer in the *Critical Review*. This turned out to be Robert Southey, and though his article may have persuaded no more than half-a-dozen readers to look up the poem, he was genuinely impressed, and repeatedly commended it to his friends. In September 1799 he wrote to Coleridge's Bristol publisher, Cottle:

> There is a poem called *Gebir*, of which I know not whether my review be yet printed (in the Critical), but in that review you will find some of the most exquisite poetry in the language. . . . I would go an hundred miles to see the anonymous author.

Three months later he told Grosvenor Bedford, "There is a poem called *Gebir*, written by God knows who, sold for a shilling; it has miraculous beauties." He recommended it to William Taylor of Norwich as "the miraculous work of a madman," and on leaving for Lisbon in the following spring, told Coleridge that the only books he was taking to read on the voyage "were your poems, the Lyrics, the Lyrical Ballads, and Gebir," adding, "I like Gebir more and more; if you ever meet its author, tell him I took it with me on a voyage." On the boat he "read Gebir again," and found "he grows upon me"; in the preface to his *Thalaba*, he acknowledged an indebtedness to *Gebir* for a strengthening of his own verse; and when his friend Humphry Davy expressed admiration for *The Conspiracy of Gowrie*, he declared Rough's play "an imitation of Gebir," exclaiming, "How could you compare this man's book with Rough's? The lucid passages of *Gebir* are all palpable to the eye; they are the master-touches of a painter; there is power in them, and passion, and thought, and knowledge."

Southey's opinion carried weight with his friends. So did Parr's with his vast acquaintance, and Parr publicised Landor in the words which he wrote on the fly-leaf of his copy of the Latinised *Gebir*, "the work of a scholar and a poet." Rough's advice was sound; if Landor had followed *Gebir* with other work of comparable merit, he would have acquired one of

those enthusiastic little followings which lay the foundation of great reputations. Moreover, his political letters to the press drew upon him the attentions of Tory journalists; he was attacked in the *Anti-Jacobin Review* as "a coward and a profligate."

"Could you imagine it," he exclaimed hotly to Parr. "Thank God, I have in my favour the example of Mr. Lemuel Gulliver, who, when the Lilliputians climbed and crept over him, forbore that contention which a more equal or a more formidable enemy would have aroused."

But he neglected to take advantage of these opportunities to make a literary name. Two years elapsed before his next volume after *Gebir* and then it was a slight book of *Poems from the Arabic and Persian*, described as "by the author of Gebir," printed at Warwick, and on sale by a single London bookseller —Rivingtons of St. Paul's Church Yard. In the same year (1800) he had printed privately at Frome or Oxford a pamphlet of Latin verses, entitled *Iambi*, which must have pleased Parr, but was probably read by nobody else, except Walter Birch. The English poems attracted no attention; even Southey, on the watch for his next book, remarked disappointedly: "I see the author of *Gebir* has been translating from the Arabic and Persian. Can there possibly be Arabic and Persian poetry which the author of *Gebir* may be excused for translating?"

Landor knew neither Arabic nor Persian. Years later, he told Crabb Robinson that the poems were "in imitation" of the Persian and Arabic, and when, in 1858, he reprinted them in *Dry Sticks*, he told Browning that he wrote them "after reading what had been translated from the Arabic & Persian by Sir W. Jones and Dr. Nott." Parr was doubtless partly responsible, for Sir William Jones, who died in 1794, had been a close and much admired friend of his, and he probably lent Landor copies of his works. The *Select Odes from the Persian Poet Hafiz*, translated into English verse by John Nott—apparently "the learned Dr. Nott" who was appointed tutor to the unfortunate Princess Charlotte—Landor found in his father's library, for

in the list of subscribers to the work, published in 1787, appears the name, "Landor—M.D. Warwick."

Robert Landor said he "often tried to dissuade him from such diminutive works, or rather scraps, as betraying too much impatience, and as excusing the public neglect." But Robert was only nineteen in 1800, and Landor was unlikely to take much notice of his advice, even if it was offered. Disappointed with the reception of *Gebir*, he yet secretly doubted his capacity to repeat its merits; he had no critical faculty, for he utterly lacked the instinct of appraising men, women, or art, and feared lest he might produce a goose in mistake for a swan. As at school and college he declined competition with others, he now declined competition with himself. His conscience misgave him; he knew he was wasting his gifts and opportunities. These slight volumes following *Gebir* were efforts to soothe his conscience, to deceive himself momentarily that he was doing something; they were also food for his vanity, since they provided excuse for his acquaintance to talk about him.

"Have you read Landor's book of verses," one would say. "Marvellously clever! He could do something really big if he liked."

Such remarks incited him to a pose which became his natural habit for life—that of a great mind tossing off trifles in leisure moments for his own amusement.

His obscure little books had the virtue also of providing opportunities for pretty women to say, "Oh, Mr. Landor, I've heard so much about your beautiful poems, and I do so want to read them, but I can't get hold of them," and enabled him to earn charming thanks by presenting copies, suitably inscribed. When venturesome men expressed wonder that he did not court a wider public, he would give vent to one of his violent outbursts, inveighing scornfully against the mob and the contemptible poverty of popular taste. Such has been the conventional pose of the "highbrow" from the beginning of time, but Landor differed from the type, not only in his possession of genius, but in feeling genuine contempt for popular taste and

opinion. But, in defiance of his true intellectual dignity, his vanity would have exulted in the acclamation of a big public, and much of his subsequent disparagement of Byron was inspired by Byron's sensational vogue.

He prepared a third slight volume for the press in 1800, though it was not till 1802 that *Poetry by the Author of Gebir* eventually appeared, also printed at Warwick and sold in London by Rivingtons. The delay was due to urgent recommendations to suppressions by friends who saw the proofs. Walter Birch urged the suppression of "An Address to the Fellows of Trinity College, Oxford, on the Alarm of Invasion;" it would cause offence and half its effect be lost by its theme being no longer topical. Probably on Birch's advice, too, satirical verses derisive of the Rev. George Richards, the Rev. James Hurdis, and the Prince of Wales were left out.

A *Postscript to Gebir* was suppressed on the request of another friend, Isaac Mocatta. It was a truculent reply to an adverse review of *Gebir* in the *Monthly Review*, attributed by Forster to a man named Pybus. The reviewer accused Landor of borrowing from Milton; he challenged the reviewer to cite the borrowings, and admitting his admiration for Milton, cleverly turned the tables by mocking the idea that the merest resemblance of Milton's genius could be reproduced in a poem of his. But he lost this advantage by descending to cheap insolence in promising to "subject myself to any penalty either of writing or of ceasing to write," if the reviewer would take his twenty worst verses and "write better an equal number in the period of twenty years." Finally he aired his pose of careless ease in composition and contempt for popularity.

> So little was I anxious to publish my rhapsodies, that I never sat down in the house an hour at once for the purpose of composition. . . . Far from soliciting the attention of those who are passing by, *Gebir* is confined, I believe, to the shop of one bookseller, and I never heard that he had even made his appearance at the window. I understand not the management of those matters, but I find that the writing of a book is the least that an author has to do.

It was at this time that Napoleon labelled the English a nation of shopkeepers, but Landor failed to realise that he was committing an unforgivable crime in satirising the artificial conventions of commerce and the gullibility of the public.

Mocatta, a Jew, warned him. Two generations before Benjamin Disraeli raised the social status of his race in England during the golden age of Victorian trade, Landor was above the general habit of racial prejudice. In this same *Postscript*, mentioning Isaac D'Israeli, author of *Curiosities of Literature*, he remarked, referring to D'Israeli's claiming Italian descent, that "he is one of the children of Israel nevertheless," adding:

> I mark this circumstance not by way of reproach, for in the number of my acquaintance there is none more valuable, there is not one more lively, more inquiring, more regular; there is not one more virtuous, more beneficent, more liberal, more tender in heart, or more true in friendship than my friend Mocatta; he also is a Jew.

Mocatta, like Parr, provides an instance of Landor's ability to win the affection and esteem of men a generation older than himself. Of liberal opinions in politics, he neither shared Landor's extreme views nor saw in the rise of Buonaparte the salvation of French democracy; a refined scholar, he believed in Landor's literary talents but deprecated his extravagances, and justly recognised the faults of incoherence in *Gebir*. In December 1800, when Landor, probably at Rough's suggestion, was thinking of writing a play, Mocatta warned him that "a tragedy replete with sentiments such as you could not help to infuse would not be received by the manager or sanctioned by the Lord Chamberlain"; he believed his talents "equal to the greatest undertaking," but dreaded "that impetuosity which disdains those minor niceties of language which are yet necessary to show where the narrative stands and what is going on." Mocatta died in the summer of 1801. He left some books and a statuette of Prometheus to Landor, who endorsed the letter notifying him of the bequest, "I never knew a better or wiser man, or one more friendly."

CHAPTER III

THE REGENCY BUCK

§ 1

According to his brother Robert, Landor lived with Nancy Jones at Swansea till the birth of their child. It seems unlikely that the connection lasted long after his meeting with Rose Aylmer, which happened about the same time as the burial of the nine months' old child at Swansea. For the next fourteen years he was never free from some amorous entanglement. The lines "To Neaera" were probably addressed to a mistress he had in London between 1798 and 1801:

> Thank Heaven, Neaera, once again
> Our hands and ardent lips shall meet,
> And pleasure, to assert his reign,
> Scatter ten thousand kisses sweet:
> Then cease repeating, while you mourn,
> "I wonder when he will return."

The connection with this lady presumably ended when he started a serious courtship which progressed to the brink of marriage—perhaps, even, Neaera played a part in the breakdown of the marriage plans. He told his brother Henry he "was to have been married" in the summer of 1801.

"But, after committing a piece of foolery in which I was the puppet, the farce concluded. But what can it signify? I can only be sixty thousand pounds the poorer."

Four lines of verse, dated 1801 and discovered among his papers after his death, may refer to the troubles which beset his courtship of this heiress.

> "I would not see thee weep but there are hours
> When smiles may be less beautiful than tears,
> Some of those smiles, some of those tears were ours;
> Ah! why should either now give place to fears?"

The heiress probably lived at Oxford, for Landor spent the summer of 1801 in lodgings there. His brother Robert was in residence at Worcester College, where he took his degree that summer and was elected to a fellowship. For fourteen years from this time, there existed considerable intimacy between Landor and his youngest brother. However little his other brothers and sisters had to thank him for, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that Landor behaved during these years as an affectionate elder brother to "Robin," as he called him. When they eventually quarrelled, they held no communication for some sixteen years and Robert exhibited the capacity for nursing a grudge which he imputed to Landor as a fault. When both were elderly, it was Landor who sought the younger brother out, but Robert made cool response, and the tone of his reminiscences quoted by Forster, coming from an old man and a parson, rings harshly unsweetened by the quality of charity.

There was something of the Jesuit in Robert Landor. As a young man, he was secretive in his comings and goings; his family rarely knew where he was or what he was doing. "What is Robert doing that he does not write to me," demanded Landor of their mother in 1808, and three years later he wrote jokingly to their sister Elizabeth, "Bless Robin! What is he plotting at Oxford?" In 1820–21 he was the author of the "Letters of Laternarius" to the *Courier,* containing a libel on Queen Caroline, for which the newspaper was prosecuted; he did not come forward as the author, as Landor would have

done in such circumstances. In the family letters and elsewhere there are sufficient hints to surmise that he practised anonymous journalism freely from his Oxford days to the date of Laternarius; it is now generally recognised that he wrote in 1808 the scurrilous *Guy's Porridge Pot*, which was widely ascribed to his eldest brother, who suffered personal inconvenience from the rumour. Though he professed to Forster that he advised Landor against obscure publication of his work, he himself published *The Impious Feast* in 1828 with a minor publisher, and though he followed this with another book in his own name, he published *The Fawn of Sertorius* anonymously in 1846. When it was highly praised by critics who believed it to be the work of his famous brother, Robert wrote to the press avowing the authorship. This, thinks his biographer, "shows that he scorned the possible advantages of silence when silence implied a lie," but the effect was to derive a second dose of publicity by disclosing that the critics had praised the work of an unknown as that of a famous writer.

His biographer asserts that Robert was "a high Tory" in politics, but he himself told Forster that he was known at Oxford as "Citizen Landor," while "Walter was a black Jacobin." To the undergraduate, just taking his final schools, his elder brother appeared a figure for admiration and imitation; he was the fully fledged author of six books and everywhere hailed a young man of brilliant promise, he was the valued friend of the celebrated Dr. Parr and on familiar terms with well-known London journalists and politicians, he enjoyed success with a proud, aggressive arrogance, he affected an air of careless disillusion to screen his secret dissatisfaction with himself.

Robert modelled himself on Walter. He echoed his political opinions and cherished literary ambitions like his. At Oxford, Landor resumed his old friendship with Walter Birch, and he and his younger brother vied together in shocking his sober stolidity. "But Birch loved Walter and smiled at me," said Robert; he forgave anything in the old schoolfellow who held

his affection and admiration, and tolerated the imitative puppy for his elder brother's sake.

But Landor's republicanism sustained a rude shock when he visited Paris in August 1802, after the Peace of Amiens. All the extreme Whigs took this opportunity of visiting the country which they believed—as the English Labour Party believed of Russia a hundred and twenty years later—to have put into glorious practice the principles of democracy which they themselves fervently advocated. Charles James Fox himself went over, to be entertained delightsomely, at the government direction, by the brilliant and beautiful Madame Tallien. Landor could have obtained introductions from Adair to leading republican lights, including the great soldier Berthier, but he preferred to see for himself as a private tourist.

His first impressions were not encouraging. After being delayed a day on the road, he stayed at an hotel where there was no fire in any of its sixty rooms, and he had to put on his shirt "as damp as a newspaper from the press."

> Lodgings are three times as dear as in London. I give four livres a night for a miserable bedroom, besides which I have another poor brick-floor apartment for a guinea—louis—a week. It has cost me six or eight shillings a day on an average for coach hire, having been completely laid up with a swelling on the ancle, which however, I do not think was gout, & which I have now removed by bathing in cold water.

He visited Versailles and the Petit Trianon, and spent "three or four hours every day in the gallery of pictures." The Tory press had made much of Buonaparte's plundering Italy of its art treasures, but Landor assured his brother Henry that not a quarter of the pictures he saw were "the spoils of Italy."

> Many were brought from the King's palace, and many were the property of rich emigrants. The number of statues brought recently from Italy does not exceed seventy four, while those belonging to the palaces and gardens are at least five hundred, not including those which are of bronze.

He found that the pillaging of mansions by the mob had been much exaggerated; "the religious houses alone have suffered by the revolution and these in general not much."

In a letter to his sister Elizabeth on 13th August he described his first sight of Buonaparte.

> I stood within six or eight yards of him nearly a quarter of an hour. His countenance is not of that fierce cast which you see in the prints, & which perhaps it may assume in battle. He seems melancholy and reserved, but not morose or proud. . . . He rode a little white horse, about the size of my father's, and cantered up & down six or eight lines of military drawn out in the Court of the Tuileries, which is about the size of Lincolns-Inn-fields. Each line lowered its colours as he passed and he took off his hat in return. The French are not mightily civil, and one cannot much wonder, but I got an admirable place by a piece of well-timed flattery. After I had seen Bonaparte canter by me, at the distance of about a dozen yards, I left my situation at the window, and went down close to the gate of the palace. Presently came the Chief Consul & half a score generals. The people made room, thro fear of the horses, which indeed were fierce enough, being covered with blue or red velvet, one half of which was hid with gold lace. Instead of going with the crowd, I pushed forward & got by the side of Buonaparte's Mamalouk, in a place where there were none but soldiers. There was a very tall fellow just before me. I begged him to let me see Buonaparte, and observed that probably *he* had seen him often and shared his victories. The youth was delighted. Ah le voila, Monsieur, said he and in a moment there was nothing between me and this terror of Europe, but the backs of two horses over which I could see him as distinctly as I see this paper.

This was the occasion he remembered sixty years later, when he told Kate Field that Buonaparte "was exceedingly handsome then, with a rich olive complexion and oval face, youthful as a girl's," and how "near him rode Murat, mounted upon a gold-clad charger; and very handsome he was too, but coxcombical."

He saw Buonaparte again a few days later, on "the most important day since the commencement of the revolution."

The palace of Government, the Metropolitan church, the arches of the bridges, the bridges themselves and all the public edifices were illuminated most magnificently. In the garden of the Tuilleries there were several hundred pyramids of wood, about twenty-five feet high covered with the most brilliant lamps. . . .There was not a statue nor an orange tree of which you could not distinguish the minutest part.

But he noted that, in spite of all this lavish display by the authorities, "the private houses were no more illuminated than usual," while shops were merely lighted with two lamps instead of one. When Buonaparte appeared on the palace balcony, beside his wife and the other two consuls:

I expected that the sky would have been rent with acclamations; on the contrary he experienced such a reception as was experienced by Richard the Third. He was sensibly mortified. He bowed, but he waved to & fro, and often wiped his face with his handkerchief. He retired in about ten minutes.

As he witnessed the scene, Landor realised with a sickening shock the criminal humbug of a ruthless autocracy masquerading as representative of the will of the people. Edmund Burke had been right. The nation which Fox and his followers had praised as the pioneers of enlightened democracy were the driven slaves of a military dictatorship. In the first shock of the revelation that all his beliefs since boyhood were vain illusions, he was seized with a burning hatred for the nation which had betrayed his ideals and the man who sponsored the betrayal. Henceforth he echoed Alfieri's maxim that "nothing good ever came out of France, or ever will," and his loathing of Napoleon remained unabated in his old age when the same feeling descended upon his nephew. In 1859, when he was annoying Mrs. Browning by his vituperation of Napoleon III, he declaimed against "this wretch and his uncle" as "the two greatest scourges of Italy."

Returning from the Tuileries to his lodgings, he vented his feelings in a letter to his brother Henry.

Doubtless the government of Buonaparte is the best that can be contrived for Frenchmen. Monkeys must be chained, tho it may cost them some grimaces. If you have read attentively the last senatus consultum, you will find that not an atom of liberty is left. This people, the most inconstant, and therefore the most contemptible in the world, seem'd to have recovered their senses when they had lost their freedom. The idol is beyond their reach, but the idolatry has vanished. . . . A consul of so great a genius will make the nation formidable to all the earth but England, but I hope there is no danger of any one imitating its example. As to the cause of liberty, this cursed nation has ruined it for ever.

He did not prolong his stay at Paris. Long afterwards, he said he returned home "at the end of the year," and he remembered Madame Tallien, Madame Récamier, and Napoleon's sister Pauline as three of the most beautiful women he saw at Paris. Most of his letters to his brother Henry relate to money matters, and he had previously written to ask his brother to undertake the delicate business of requesting their father "to advance me twenty pounds of my next quarter's revenue."

"My pocket begins to wax feeble. One cannot travel in France or live at Paris for a little. They know an Englishman everywhere. . . ."

He wanted to join some friends who were going on from Paris to Switzerland the following month, and "if my mother would lend me a hundred pounds, this would make all the difference between travelling comfortably and uncomfortably." He concluded by mentioning "another matter which I mentioned to you in London and which I hope you have not forgotten. I leave the management of everything to your discretion." It was to be his life-long habit to leave his financial affairs to the

discretion of somebody else, and this is the first of innumerable letters containing similar messages.

§ 2

On his return to England, he seems finally to have renounced any idea of adopting a political career. He dropped his correspondence with Adair and ceased to contribute to the Whig press. His impressions of France and its First Consul had dispelled any hopes he had of honesty in politics, and since he could no longer profess even partial approval of Fox's policy, he found himself without sympathy with any political party. Without the aid of a party machine, he could not hope for a seat in Parliament, and he disdained to lend himself to journalism which he knew to be directed from party headquarters.

In his Oxford lodgings, he worked on a new edition of *Gebir*, which was published by the Oxford firm of Slatter and Munday in 1803. A notice of *Poetry by the Author of Gebir* had appeared in the *Annual Review*—written by Southey, though Landor believed it to be by the editor of the periodical, Arthur Aikin—which charged him with courting the danger of obscurity by striving too eagerly for compression. Leaping from one idea to another, without wasting words on connective explanation, might be exaggerated into "a mere short-hand, reminding a writer of his own conceptions, but never explaining them to others." This, the obvious fault in *Gebir*, was intensified in *From the Phocaeans*, which, though only the fragment of an intended epic was the longest poem in *Poetry by the Author of Gebir*. But it seems that this poem was written before *Gebir*. He conceived the idea of a poem on the subject of the invaders of Gaul who founded Marseilles when he was given Justin to read at Oxford; he told Browning that "before the year's end I did what you see, and corrected it the year following." In his own copy of the book he noted at the end of "Part of Protis's Narrative," which was another fragment of the same poem,

There would have been a second part of this poem, narrating a sea-fight with the Carthaginians recorded in history; then conflicts with the natives. The main difficulty was to devise names for them. An approximation was attempted from the Welsh and Irish, many of which are harmonious in the termination, an essential in poetry. Druids, Druidesses, Bards, old oaks, and capacious wicker-baskets were at hand.

Evidently he was working on this poem at Swansea, when Rose Aylmer lent him Clara Reeve's novel, and he left off to begin *Gebir*. Having once put it aside, he never took it up again; perhaps he found himself baffled by his own obscurity and unable to remember how he had intended the theme to develop. Mrs. Browning reckoned the fragment in "a high classic rank" beside *Gebir*, but most critics have echoed Forster in disparaging *From the Phocaeans* as "too like its own Sardian vase of burnished gold,"

"Dazzling without, but dark from depth within,"

and in applauding the next longest poem in the same volume, the *Story of Crysaor*, which was written after *Gebir* and considered by Colvin "to foreshadow the *Hyperion* of Keats, except that the manner of the elder poet is more massive, more concentrated, and proportionally less lucid than that of the younger."

In revising *Gebir* for the edition of 1803, Landor was so far influenced by the criticism of the *Annual Review* that he expanded passages here and there to make a total addition of nearly fifty lines to the original. But it is noteworthy that, when he again revised the poem in 1831, he preferred his own matured judgment to critical advice, and reduced the length to over a hundred lines less than the original. In 1803 he published also through Slatter and Munday a Latin version of *Gebir*, or *Gebirus*, which greatly pleased Parr, if nobody else.

Besides the added lines in the new edition, Landor included numerous notes as a commentary on the text. Some of them reflected the change in his political views effected by his visit

to France. On the line describing Buonaparte as "a mortal man above all mortal praise," he commented:

> Bonaparte might have been so, and in the beginning of his career it was augured that he would be. But unhappily he thinks that to produce great changes is to perform great actions. To annihilate ancient freedom and substitute new; to give republics a monarchical government, and the provinces of monarchy a republican one; in short, to overthrow by violence all the institutions and to tear from the heart all the social habits of man, has been the tenor of his politics to the present hour.

Robert Landor was in close touch with his brother—probably it was he who secured the services of a Christ Church scholar named Dovaston to correct the proofs of *Gebirus* at £2 a sheet and he must have been mystified by this change of faith. As he was eager to write, Landor probably introduced him to the *Courier*, and as that newspaper leaned more and more to the government side as it fell under the control of Stuart's assistant, Peter Street, so Robert Landor's political colour gradually changed. Landor, on the other hand, loved Pitt no better for his disillusion about Buonaparte; he held definitely to his principles of democracy, though the prospect of their adoption seemed hopelessly remote since the subjection of France to a military dictatorship.

§ 3

With the final rejection of the possibility of a political career he seems to have abandoned his scruples of conscience. He gave himself up entirely to idle enjoyment of life. He was always in debt, and apparently borrowed money on his prospects.

> Do not be in any alarm [he wrote to his brother Henry in February 1805] lest I should write to Mr. Hicken for money. I have more than I shall spend before the next quarter. Had I written to him at all it would not have been for more than ten pounds, and now the necessity is over.

The necessity was over until the next tradesman's dunning letter came along, when he would raise money from the readiest available source, from his father's bankers, his agent, or a moneylender. His father gave him some property—only a few months before his death, the old man conveyed to him the house in Rugeley market place where his uncle lived—but Landor made no effort to keep within his income, content in the reflection that all his debts could be settled when he came into the estate.

Expensive and fashionable Bath became his favourite resort. His "earliest Bath friend," he said, was the brilliant and beautiful Bess Caldwell, who lived with her sister, Lady Belmore, the young widow of the first earl.

> Bess Caldwell was a well-known and loved Mrs. Malaprop [he wrote in 1840]. Sir William Gell, when they were at Naples, compiled—and I believe published—a book called "Caldwelliana" of her remarkable sayings. Hayward's very clever essay mentions her as having said, "She had been to see the house where Ariosto lived with the widow of Charles the First" [meaning Alfieri and the widow of Bonnie Prince Charlie]. She was a very intimate friend of my mother's.

She was an old lady when Landor published *Pericles and Aspasia* in 1836 and exclaimed on meeting him in London, "Sure, Landor, it is a beautiful book, your 'Periwinkle and Asparagus'; but faith! I've no time to read it." Once, about the same time, he described himself as having been "half baked at a dull and stupid party," which "even the brilliancy of Miss Caldwell could not render . . . supportable." His admiration, which lasted till her death fifty years after he first knew her, and her attractiveness were alike so decided that he must have been amorously disposed, but she probably kept him on terms of merely flippant gallantry. Her sister, Lady Belmore, made a favourite of him, and when she died nearly forty years later, he wrote in a reminiscence to Lady Blessington:

> I liked her frankness so much, that I overcame my abhorrence of routs, and went at her desire to hers, although to no others. But

then her small Sunday parties, never exceeding fourteen, and from which all but those whom she thought the pleasantest or the prettiest were excluded! Ah, then, indeed, was I devout, and offered my little taper offerings up at shrine after shrine. Bath, in those days, was frequented for a few weeks by many persons of high rank, and there was none of that familiarity, even among themselves, which people now indulge in with their superiors of all sorts.

His professed contempt for balls suited his pose to women of rough masculinity, but he was always an indifferent dancer, and as his vanity made him give up riding as a boy because his brother Charles rode better, so he disliked dancing because other men could outshine him under the critical eyes of women. "Not dancing well!" he exclaimed to Lady Blessington nearly thirty years later. "I never danced at all; and how grievously has my heart ached when others were in the full enjoyment of their recreation."

All the bright young things in Bath visited Lady Belmore; here Landor met young Lord Mountjoy, being bear-led by a tutor—he was to know him better more than twenty years later. It may have been among Lady Belmore's pretty guests that he first met "Ianthe." She was Sophia Jane Swift, daughter of an Irish gentleman whose great-grandfather had been uncle to the author of *Gulliver's Travels*. She married a distant cousin, the head of her family, Godwin Swifte, of Lionsden, County Kilkenny, who restored the old spelling of the family name by adding the *e*. Her second son, William Richard Swifte, her "third child of a family of seven," relates that his father was "a delicate man, and died when I was in my sixth year"—in 1814.

After my mother's acute grief for him which brought on brain fever, had worn itself out, she began once more to see her neighbours. She was a most humane and tender-hearted person, not only towards humanity in general, but also towards every species of living thing. . . . She was kept, during the assizes, in a constant state of fever, when unfortunate culprits had to stand their trial for their lives.

Often she succeeded in persuading the judge to mitigate the sentence of death. Her method was to invite the judge and jury to dinner and a dance, and to appeal to the judge when he was "in the height of good humour with wine and dancing." In this fashion she succeeded with the formidable Lord Norbury, who was heard to exclaim that he would "dance with the fascinating young widow as long as he had a leg to stand on." She stayed little more than a year in Ireland after her husband's death; though apparently left comfortably off, she was extravagant, and having been persuaded to make her children wards in Chancery, she went for a season to London, and there married in 1816, the Comte Lepelletier de Molandé, who as a boy had been page to the unhappy Princesse de Lamballe, a victim of the revolutionary mob, and was then attached to the Prince Regent's suite.

It is generally believed that she was not yet married when Landor first met her, not only because he apostrophises her as "sweet maid," but on account of the lines in the Latin verses, *Ad Ianthen*, which, though not published till 1820, were probably written at this time:

> O per virgineos, carissima dona, capillos,
> O mihi virginea non data dona manu.

Her marriage, according to family tradition, took place in 1803, and it is likely that Landor first met her in the early part of that year. Her son says it was at Bath that Landor

> became acquainted with two young ladies, sisters of great beauty. The *naiveté* and sprightliness of their disposition attracted him, perhaps, as much as their personal advantages. He constantly sought their society, and although neither of them admired his *exterieur*, yet both delighted in his company, particularly as he bore remarkably well being made a butt of by them, which their natural wit often furnished occasion for, and which he encouraged.

The two sisters, seeing him attracted, gladly welcomed the attentions of the interesting young man, reputed brilliant and

eccentric, notorious for the violence of his tongue and temper, yet so patient and gentle with them. Jane was engaged to be married, but her gay careless nature readily lent itself to a final flirtation before becoming a sedate matron. She had no thought of more than a pleasant interlude, and joined in her sister's laughter at her swain's attentions. Then suddenly she realised that Landor was seriously in love with her; her generous heart was touched, and she felt dismay at the result of her playing with fire. She was upset, not a little frightened.

> *Ask me not* . . . a voice severe
> Tells me . . . *for it gives me pain.*
> Peace! sweet maid! the hour is near
> When I cannot ask again.

The hour soon came when she had to return, with a backward compassionate glance, to Ireland for her wedding, and Landor was left to lament:

> Come back, ye Smiles, that late forsook
> Each breezy path and ferny nook.
> Come Laughter, though the sage hath said
> Thou favourest most the thoughtless head;
> I blame thee not, howe'er inclin'd
> To love the vacant easy mind;
> But now am ready, may it please,
> That mind be vacant and at ease.

It may be assumed that he soon found consolation. He was leading a life of shiftless pleasure, occasionally visiting London, spending a week or two with Robert at Oxford, but most of his time at Bath and other watering places. And pleasure for Landor meant women. Wine and food never appealed to him. He disliked dinner parties, merely eating to suit his appetite, and he never drank much, becoming almost a water drinker as his years advanced. "However active at dinner," says his brother Robert, "he was always temperate after it; and I never saw the smallest sign of excess, though he greatly enjoyed three

of four glasses of light wine." His father and his three younger brothers were all martyrs to gout, but he escaped the complaint —mercifully, for he could not endure physical pain. He had one "violent fit of the gout" when he was twelve years old, and "his imprecations, divided equally between the gout and his nurses, were heard afar." Perhaps the memory of that affliction determined him upon temperance, and being constitutionally as strong as a horse, he never suffered any serious illness throughout his long life.

But he made no attempt to conceal that he neglected no opportunities with women in his youth. There was more than one successor to Nancy Jones and Neaera; though he flattered Ianthe by grouping thirty-one love poems under her name in his volume of 1831, there is reason to suppose that some owed their inspiration to others besides Jane Swifte. Through the years 1804 and 1805 he drifted from one mistress's feet to another's. Bath was his principal haunt and of these years he wrote afterwards to Southey:

> You remind me of Bath! if not a delightful, a most easy place. . . . The South Parade was always my residence in winter. Towards spring I removed into Pulteney Street—or rather towards summer, for there were formerly as many nightingales in the garden, and along the river opposite the South Parade, as ever there were in the bowers of Schiraz. The situation is unparalleled in beauty, and is surely the warmest in England. I could get a walk into the country without crossing a street, which I hate. These advantages often kept me in Bath till the middle of June, and I always returned in the beginning of November. . . . I always hated plays and playhouses, and in the nine first years I was only once at the Bath Theatre.

Nightingales annoyed him by waking him at night; years later in Italy when he read Byron's *Bride of Abydos* and came upon the lines, "Know ye the land &c., where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit, And the voice of the nightingale never is mute," he exclaimed, "who indeed does know where the nightingale never is mute?"

Stephen Wheeler believed that Landor and Ianthe first met at Clifton, because he kept fastened inside his writing desk an engraving after a sketch by S. Jackson of the view from Clifton Church, and associated that scene with memories of Ianthe, as in the verses:

> Clifton in vain thy varied scenes invite,
> The mossy bank, dim glade, and dizzy height;
> The sheep that, starting from the tufted thyme,
> Untune the distant church's mellow chime. . . .
> Now the last lonely solace must it be
> To watch pale evening brood o'er land and sea,
> Then join my friends and let those friends believe
> My cheeks are moistened by the dews of eve.

Wheeler observed that "when seeking for autobiography in Landor's writings there are frequent pitfalls to beware of." It is treading treacherous ground to read autobiography in the work of any imaginative writer; none but Thackeray could say where fact ended and fiction began in *Pendennis* and *The Newcomes*, none but Dickens in *David Copperfield*.

But most of the love verses to Ianthe refer to stolen blisses, such as could not refer to the courtship of an unmarried girl; they suggest rather clandestine meetings with a married woman. To Birch, on 20th November 1805, Landor wrote from Clifton, "My books are just come out, Walter, and I hasten to send you the *literal errata*." His books were the proofs of *Simonidea*, printed at Bath by W. Meyler and published early in 1806, and he told Southey five years later:

> There are many things of which I am ashamed in the *Simonidea*. I printed whatever was marked with a pencil by a woman who loved me, and I consulted all her caprices.

Obviously the woman with the pencil was Ianthe, for that name appears in many of the verses, and there seems little room for doubt that Ianthe was Jane Swifte, since she countenanced these and other verses being grouped under this name when

a widow in 1831. Moreover *Gunlaug and Helga*, which cannot have been written before 1804, was addressed to her in her first name of Sophia. Apparently then, they met again at Clifton in the autumn of 1805. Jane Swifte was the traditional Irish girl, gay, ripe, warm-hearted, impulsive. The miniature of herself which Landor cherished shows a luscious, lively brunette, with a mass of dark ringlets, large, expressive eyes, a full ripe mouth, and a vivid complexion. She was generous and emotional; her son relates how she was so excited with delight when her children came to see her for the first time after her second marriage, that she was prematurely confined the same evening of a daughter. With sentimental tenderness she remembered the interesting young man who had made ardent love to her and tried to make her break her plighted troth. On meeting him again, already sentimentally disposed towards him, she was half won at his first advance; her gay and flighty nature rendered the temptation of a flirtation irresistible, and once she fell to flirting, she behaved no longer with the elusiveness of a maidenhood, but with the reckless daring of a married woman of the world.

> "Remember you the guilty night,"
> A dying Myrtle said,
> "You snatcht and seized me pale with fright?"

Meeting her daily in the social round, he had to "lower his eye and check his tongue," wait patiently the opportunity for a moment alone with her, watch for the dropping of her handkerchief to find within a note appointing a secret assignation. Their illicit amour became the subject of whispering:

> Have you not feign'd that friends reprove
> The mask of Friendship worn by love?
> Feign'd, that they whisper'd you should be
> The same to others as to me?

From his friends came hinted warnings that he was playing a dangerous game with a young married woman, who was a light-

minded, fickle flirt, with few assets besides her luscious beauty and generous frailty. But it seems that this was the one woman in Landor's life that he loved with passion. It may be argued that an egoist, such as Landor was, does not love with passion any being but his own. It may be true that no egoist ever gave lasting devotion to a woman. But none other can equal the intensity of the egoist's momentary passion; the mere consciousness of finding himself insufficient to himself fans the burning heat of his desire. For a season Landor loved Ianthe as he loved no other woman. He knew her faults—she was flippant, fickle, superficial, she had little intellectually in common with him—she held him by the laughter in her lively eyes, by her provocative allure, her sensual charm, and because she was elusive, the legal property of another, and he had to wait impatiently for stolen moments with her.

In general, only the essentially chaste or desperate unhappy woman leaves her husband for a lover. Ianthe was neither. Landor swept her off her feet; he brought romance into her life—perhaps the greatest romance of all. But she never seriously considered deserting her husband and her nursery. She would return without regrets, feeling the richer by the experience of passion, to resume her careless, easy life as a country chatelaine; perhaps sometime in her future the experience might be repeated—they must wait and see. So, soon

> Ianthe! you resolve to cross the sea!
> A path forbidden *me!*

She told him to be glad they enjoyed such love as she could give him, and not to regret what might have been; she was married and marriage could not be altered, though he would have been the husband of her choice. To which he replied:

> Bid my bosom cease to grieve!
> Bid these eyes fresh objects see!
> Where's the comfort to believe
> None would once have rival'd me?

What, my freedom to receive?
 Broken hearts, are they the free?
For another can I live
 If I may not live for thee!

She then resigned argument and resorted to appeal:

Ianthe took me by both ears, and said:
"You are so rash, I own I am afraid.
Prop, or keep hidden in your heart, my name,
But be your love as lasting as your fame."

She had a playful habit of taking him by the ears when she wished to win him to her will, for he related how he repeated to her some Latin verses, and she, knowing no Latin, "held me by both ears until I gave her the English."

When Ianthe left him, Landor's feelings of disillusion deepened. He had resigned hopes of a useful career in politics; now the woman he most desired was beyond his reach. The morose tendency of his thoughts finds reflection in the title of *Simonidea;* it was to have been a volume of elegies addressed to acquaintances already dead, like the work of Simonides. The first elegy referred to Mrs. Lambe, wife of the doctor who succeeded to his father's practice; she died in 1804 from a fever caught by nursing one of her children. He addresses Lambe as "my early guide, my guardian friend," and he had continued the affectionate friendship after the Lambes left Warwick for London. There followed the famous lines on Rose Aylmer and the elegy on Nancy Jones, but apart from these three poems and a few Latin verses at the end of the volume, the rest reveal the dictation of Ianthe's pencil. Even the one narrative poem in the book *Gunlaug and Helga,* begins,

Sophia, pity Gunlaug's fate.

In his old age, Landor told "Owen Meredith" that he owed the idea of this poem to the Hon. William Herbert's *Select Icelandic Poetry,* which was published in 1804 and brought to his notice by Walter Birch in a letter of April 1805.

The inequality of the verses in *Simonidea* appears in the examples already quoted for their biographical significance. Like Byron, Landor was capable of appalling bathos and clumsiness of expression; sometimes he could be guilty of lines rivalling in triteness

> Mary at the cottage gate
> Was eating cherries off a plate.

Ianthe's choice was not inspired by critical judgment; she chose the verses which pleased or flattered her, and rejected those which were too incriminating, like "Ianthe! you resolve to cross the sea!" Published in the spring of 1806, anonymously and without even mention of "the author of *Gebir*," the book received scant attention; a short notice appeared in the June *Monthly Review*, and Robert Landor said his first article as a professional reviewer was a review of *Gunlaug and Helga* in a short-lived periodical called the *Oxford Review*.

§ 4

While Ianthe's pencil was marking the proofs of *Simonidea* at Clifton, his father died on 3rd November 1805, and Landor wrote to Birch:

> It was an event for which we were long prepared by a most tedious and excruciative malady, a species of cancer. It was what he most earnestly & incessantly desired, and what on that account we the less bitterly regret. My fortune, as you may suppose, will be much increased, but I had always enough for my expences. After paying the younger children's fortunes, and some other incumbrances, I shall have about eleven hundred a year, my mother about fourteen hundred, from estates which are entailed on me, and which may be greatly increased when the leases have expired.

If he had always had enough for his expenses, it was not by suiting his expenditure to his pocket or without frequent sub-

sidies to his income, and he now increased his scale of living without worrying about how much was within his means. His brother Robert, visiting him at Bath soon after their father's death, found him credited "with the reputation of very great wealth, and the certainty, at his mother's death, of still greater. A fine carriage, three horses, two men-servants, books, plate, china, pictures, in everything a profuse and wasteful outlay, all confirmed the grandeur."

Whether or not the young man of twenty-five regarded his brother's "profuse and wasteful" establishment with the same eyes as Forster's sour old correspondent, he readily enjoyed Landor's hospitality. In reading his uncharitable reflections on his brother's conduct, it is not irrelevant to remember that Robert achieved materially less in his life than Landor did. Without any apparent fervour for religion, he took orders in 1804, and for a few months at the beginning of 1805, he acted as curate-in-charge at Wyke Regis in Dorsetshire during the Rector's illness. This move from Oxford to Dorset inspired the Latin verses, "Ad Fratrem," in *Simonidea.* His biographer says he resigned his Worcester fellowship (presumably in 1804) "when he was left a small independent income by a relative." But the identity of the generous relative does not appear. Forster says that Landor's father "had to sell some property in discharge of debts contracted by him; and in return he had undertaken to present his brother Charles to the family living of Colton, in the event of its not falling vacant before his father's death." This promise for Charles—fulfilled in 1806, when Charles succeeded his uncle John Landor as rector at Colton—seems a slight demand for the father to have made upon the prodigal son; more likely, in return for settling Landor's debts, the old man demanded concessions enabling him to make the provision for all his younger children desired by himself and their mother. To such a proposal Landor, who never considered the future when purchasing the solution to a present difficulty in money matters, would readily consent, and apparently the old man so far recognised the generosity of his concessions that he made

voluntarily generous gestures in his turn, for the conveyance to him of the Rugeley house was neither requested by Landor nor required by his creditors, since Landor wrote to his brother Henry in February 1805 that he did not "see the necessity of any such conveyance."

It seems probable, therefore, that Robert resigned his fellowship on his father's death in November 1805. It is significant that his biographer has been unable to find that, in the ten years between that date and his continental trip of 1815, Robert ever performed any professional duties or earned his living in any way. But after his eldest brother had gone abroad to live on an allowance from the administrators of his estate, he obtained through family influence, in 1817, a living at Hughenden and continued thenceforth in active clerical practice. There is no definite evidence, but it does seem a fair inference, that Landor to some extent subsidised his favourite brother during the years when he was master of his own money.

Forster talks of Landor's "gaieties and follies" in the first years following his accession to his inheritance. But he seems to have taken his pleasures sadly on account of the one crowning folly of his passion for Ianthe. It is difficult to determine how long he prosecuted this passion, but circumstances suggest that he continued his pursuit of her during the three years from 1805 to 1808. She apparently followed the practice of Irishwomen in her social position of spending some six months of the year in England, and he followed her round to a succession of watering places—Bath, Clifton, Brighton, Worthing. Everywhere he took expensive lodgings, and his carriage, with his pair of horses, Frolic and Favourite, was probably more often at her disposal than his own. It may be mere coincidence, but her son relates that Ianthe had a dog named Frolic at the time of her meeting Landor again more than twenty years later.

His verses reflect the vicissitudes of their amour. His family and friends viewed with disapproval and reproach his pursuit of a married woman, which could produce no happiness and might end in open scandal. Difficulties and the defiance of social

decorum appealed to the rebel in Landor, and an undated letter to his sister Elizabeth reveals that, on at least one occasion, he threatened to follow Ianthe to her home in Ireland. He sent his sister a song of which he wrote an Italian translation, thinking "the English would be less proper for music."

It was written when I first had thoughts of going into Ireland, and when I was—as we all of us are, some time or other—so foolish as to be in love. . . . Here are the words

In vain, O Love my steps you guide
To shores for which I've often sighed!
 No longer is Ianthe mine!
On whom so blest as once were we
While I lov'd her and she lov'd me
 Did evening close or morning shine?
Could I then ask my heart, if this
Were sure repose and lasting bliss!
 Could I then wish to change my lot!
I fancied Pleasure was untrue
But I have lived to learn and rue
 Alas that Grief is not.

Clearly he sought to persuade Ianthe to defy convention, leave her husband and children, and live with him openly till divorce freed her to marry him. But Ianthe preferred such a *liaison* as was freely and tacitly accepted in society at Bath and Brighton under the Prince Regent. She would waver, feign compliance with his plans while they were happy together; then, when the time came for her return to Ireland, she would tear herself away, tearfully protesting that she could not yet bring herself to the vital step but—perhaps when she came to England next time. In her absence Landor tortured himself with the thought of her in another's possession: "I often ask upon whose arm she leans." Sometimes he exulted in reflections on her anguish at leaving him:

Flow, precious tears! thus shall my rival know
 For me, not him, ye flow.

As time went on, and she still evaded his pleas, their love became tainted by his reproaches.

> So late removed from him she swore,
> With clasping arms and vows and tears,
> In life and death she would adore,
> Which memory, fondness, bliss, endears. . . .
> Can she forswear? can she forget?
> Strike, mighty Love! strike, Vengeance! . . . soft!
> Conscience must come, and bring Regret. . . .
> These let her feel! . . . nor these too oft!

His sister Elizabeth was his closest confidante and counsellor. Horrified at his wasting himself on a married flirt, she begged him to find a suitable wife.

> Birth and fortune are not requisite, but good disposition and good understanding are; and how many innocents, only for being pretty, have you all your life been thinking sensible!

And again:

> I hope to God your choice may be a fortunate one, for I never was and never shall be happy when you are otherwise. You are not just to me. I *do* wish you to be married; but I am sure the common sort are not calculated for you.

As he came to despair of persuading Ianthe to leave her husband, he began to bow to his sister's appeals and to seek another woman to displace Ianthe in his heart.

He was tiring of his life in changing lodgings, and wanted to settle in a home of his own. Forster says his extravagance demanded "selling the old paternal estate in Staffordshire, and reinvesting in other land at greater profit." But apart from the fact that Landor's original plan was not to sell the Rugeley estate, but to persuade his mother to dispose of Tachbrook, neither of the estates he contemplated buying could be reckoned to compete in value per acre with the well cultivated land of Staffordshire or Warwickshire. He had no desire to settle

within the social circle of his family's friends; he wanted a home in romantic surroundings, suiting his pose as an eccentric and a poet. Naturally his fancy turned first to the Lakes, already endowed with glamour as the refuge of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey, and he made a pilgrimage there in the summer of 1807, only a few months before young De Quincey, accompanying the Coleridge family, paid his first visit to Grasmere. He was armed with a letter of introduction from Dr. Parr, which fairly describes the impression he might have left on an acquaintance at that time.

> In the course of the summer, you will be called upon by Mr. Walter Landor, who is going on a tour to the Lakes. He is my particular friend. He is impetuous, open-hearted, magnanimous; largely furnished with general knowledge; well versed in the best classical writers; a man of original genius, as appears in his compositions both in prose and verse; a keen hater of oppression and corruption; and a steady friend to civil and religious liberty. I am confident you will be much interested by his conversation; and it is my good fortune to know that his talents, attainments and virtues amply compensate for all his singularities.

When he wrote this, Parr had known Landor intimately for twelve years, and it is fair to remember that Parr, though he had singularities of character as striking as Landor's own, then enjoyed a reputation commanding the respect of all educated Englishmen.

Landor met none of the Lakeside notabilities on his visit; he mentioned to his sister his regret that he had missed an introduction to Southey. He fell in love with an estate at Loweswater, but while he was arguing with his mother about means of raising money for the purchase the opportunity of buying was lost. His disappointment still fresh, he visited his old haunts in South Wales, and penetrating into the Black Mountains, found his way into the wild vale enshrining the ruins of Llanthony Abbey. Stricken by the sombre beauty of the place, he lost no time, sought out the owner's agent, and paid a deposit.

His mother, concerned to do her best for her younger chil-

dren and depending on her son Henry for advice, made difficulties, and not before 16th June 1808 could Landor write to her:

I have just returned from Monmouthshire and find here two letters from Henry. It is impossible for me to express how sensible I am of your goodness in consenting to clear and complete the purchase of Lanthony, by selling the property at Tachebrook.

But if her consent had been given, his mother quickly repented of it, and having received "Henry's very extraordinary letter," Landor wrote to her in a fit of annoyance, referring acidly to his brother's advice. His mother ignored this letter, and he wrote again on 30th June, proposing that they should agree to accept the opinion of an independent arbitrator. He added:

It would certainly save me at least a thousand pounds if I were able to make my bargain with the freeholders at Lanthony before the road is finished. I cannot do this, until we have agreed to sell. But surely the sale of Tachebrook will not alter your intentions in regard to the timber. Your accommodation to me is an act of kindness, and my giving up Colton to you is to make amends for any advantages (in timber or otherwise) that might arise to you from keeping the estate in your own hands.

His mother replied that she would sell her land at Tachbrook if he agreed to pay her an annuity of £450 for life, she would sell him her share on adjoining property for £2000, and she would only consent to cutting down timber to raise money for his Llanthony expenses if he would secure the full value of the timber to her executors. She excused her hard bargaining by pointing out,

as I think your Sisters & Robert will have very small fortunes, I certainly aught to make up as much for them as I can, & there is no other way than falling of Timber at Ipsley. . . . Their whole fortunes will not in all probability exceed £3000 each, while at my Death you will have more per annum; now ask your own heart if I am doing wrong by endeavouring to make them in a comfort-

able situation for Life, & their health may occasion expences we little now think of.

Landor replied on 7th July: "I return you a thousand thanks for your very kind letter, and perfectly agree to all your proposals. Nothing can be more just than that I should pay the full value of the timber . . ." A few days later he wrote again, emphasising that "I shall want all the money I can raise to pay off the incumbrances on Lanthony and to purchase the remainder of the manor."—as to cutting the woods at Ipsley—"as I shall never see the place again, I am not quite so anxious as I might be about any havoc that may be made."

But the arrangements with his mother produced only a fraction of his lavish expenditure on Llanthony, and he sold his own property of Rugeley, about four-fifths of which had been in his family for more than a century, for £35,715. Years later, coming upon a beautiful scene on the borders of Staffordshire and Derbyshire, he exclaimed that he could envy the owner of such a lovely spot, and was astonished when his companion drily informed him that it formed part of the family estate he had sold.

§ 5

While writing to his mother in June and July 1808, Landor was moving about from Clifton to Worthing, to Brighton and Bath. Evidently he had returned from Monmouthshire to pursue Ianthe, again over from Ireland, for he sent Southey some Latin elegiacs, of which he said Ianthe had "held me by both ears till I gave her the English":

> Soon, O Ianthe, life is o'er,
> And sooner beauty's playful smile!
> Kiss me, and grant what I implore,
> Let love remain that little while.

He had met Southey in April, for on the 26th of that month Southey wrote to his old friend Grosvenor Bedford:

At Bristol I met with the man of all others whom I was most desirous of meeting—the only man living of whose praise I was ambitious, or whose censure would have humbled me. You will be curious to know who this could be. Savage Landor, the author of *Gebir*, a poem which, unless you have heard me speak of it, you have probably never heard of at all. I never saw any one more unlike myself in every prominent part of human character, nor any one who so cordially and instinctively agreed with me on so many of the most important subjects. I have often said before we met, that I would walk forty miles to see him, and having seen him, I would gladly walk fourscore to see him again. He talked of Thalaba, and I told him of the series of mythological poems which I had planned —mentioned some of the leading incidents on which they were to have been formed, and also told him for what reason they were laid aside;—in plain English that I could not afford to write them.

Landor's reply was, "Go on with them, and I will pay for printing them, as many as you will write and as many copies as you please."

Southey told Walter Scott that, though he had not "the least thought of accepting this princely offer, it has stung me to the very core," and on his return home to Keswick, he sent Landor all that he had written of *The Curse of Kehama*, saying, "You offered to print it for me; if ever I finish the poem it will be because of that offer, though without the slightest intention of accepting it."

The friendship between Landor and Southey continued unbroken till the latter's death. Cynical critics of Landor's temper may say that the friendship endured because they saw little of each other, for they met rarely, for a few days at a time, with intervals often of several years. But Landor felt for Southey a respect as deep, allied with enthusiastic admiration, as he felt for Parr, and since he never fell out with Parr, he could hardly have quarrelled with Southey. Byron called Southey "the only existing entire man of letters"; he was also the most completely admirable man as a personality in the history of English letters. Five months older than Landor, he too had been a rebel and a Jacobin; at Oxford he despised the "pedantry, prejudice, and aristocracy" of the university, and shocked authority by refus-

ing to have his hair dressed and powdered by the college barber, wearing his hair in its natural state. The ardent apostle of pantisocracy, he was the recognised leader of the little circle which planned a miniature Utopia; the brilliant, shiftless Coleridge followed obediently the lead of his strong serene personality. Coleridge's countless biographers rarely fail to blame Southey for driving him into marriage with Sarah Fricker, yet it was only characteristic of Southey's generous heart that, being himself romantically in love with his Edith, he eagerly wished his friend to enjoy similar happiness with her sister. He married without a penny, and after a wry grimace at the necessity, he set out with serene optimism to earn his living as "hireling writer to a newspaper." A hireling writer he remained all his life; year after year, with tireless regularity, he produced leading articles, reviews, biographies, historical works of wide research, till the trained machine of his brain gave way.

Dowden said truly that "there is not perhaps any single work of Southey's the loss of which would be felt by us as a capital misfortune." But literary snobbishness tempted him to understatement in saying "the more we consider his total work, its mass, its variety, its high excellence, the more we come to regard it as a memorable, an extraordinary achievement." It was an achievement more than merely memorable; it was magnificent. Through years of unflagging labour, he gave of his best, not only in the fine quality of his work, but in the generous goodness of his daily life. Nobody appealed in vain to him for comfort or advice; when Coleridge's genius foundered on the shoals of despondence and drugs, Southey shouldered his responsibilities in addition to his own. Nobility was the keystone of his character. If men received their just deserts, Southey should have won his way to affluent ease and lasting fame; the sorrows and sufferings which rewarded his virtue must occasion discomfort to professed believers in a benevolent deity. During his life, continuous and conscientious toil earned him a reputation of dignity, but even this was taken from him by the malice of Wordsworth, and after his death posterity accepted his value

at the assessment of that man of genius, whose selfishness shrivelled his soul into a nerveless scab.

His brother Robert justly said that Landor was never ungrateful in repaying admiration in kind; if he liked a man, he was always ready to believe his work as good as he hoped it might be. Landor therefore stoutly persisted in regarding Southey as the greatest poet of his time, for he assessed him at his true value as a man. Long after Southey's death, he expressed the hope that he and Cowper had met in heaven, for "two such men have seldom met on earth." He declared that Southey's *Roderick*, *Thalaba*, and *Curse of Kehama* surpassed any three poems by Wordsworth, who lacked Southey's diversity and invention as well as his humour. But he emphasised his love for the man; "if his elegant prose and harmonious verse are insufficient to incite enthusiasm, turn to his virtues, to the ardour and constancy of his friendship, to his disinterestedness, to his generosity." Southey's regard for Landor was similar. At the time he publicly admitted the influence of *Gebir* on his own verse, and long afterwards told Bowles that the "three contemporaries, the influence of whose poetry on my own I can distinctly trace," were "Sayers, yourself, and Walter Landor." But while men like Browning and Forster cherished Landor's friendship because he was a man of genius, Southey, like Parr, valued him for his own sake. "Never did man," he wrote, "represent himself in his writings so much less generous, less just, less compassionate, less noble in all respects than he really is. I certainly never knew anyone of brighter genius or of kinder heart."

After he had been Landor's friend for sixteen years, Southey wrote to Caroline Bowles, who became his second wife, "Differing as I do from him in constitutional temper, and in some serious opinions, he is yet of all men living the one with whom I feel the most sympathy in heart and mind." The feeling of mutual confidence began with their first meeting, for they discussed freely their most intimate problems, Southey writing, "I wish you were married, because the proverb about a rolling stone applies to a single heart, and I wish you were as much a

Quaker as I am," while Landor confided his love for Ianthe.

But, finding that he could hope for nothing more permanent than a *liaison* with Ianthe, his old dissatisfaction with himself had returned, and he longed to do something worth while with his life. Spain was suffering a tragedy curiously similar in historical detail to that which was repeated a century and a quarter later. King Charles IV had been compelled to abdicate in favour of his son Ferdinand, who, after a brief inglorious reign as Buonaparte's puppet placed his crown at the disposal of the conqueror, who bestowed it upon his brother Joseph. The Spaniards promptly revolted, and there were hot expressions of sympathy in England. Southey exclaimed that there was "more public virtue in Spain than in any other country under Heaven," and saw in the revolt "a spirit of patriotism, a growing and proud remembrance of the past, a generous shame for the present, and a living hope for the future," which might yet inspire England to something better than the degrading policy of "appeasement" towards Buonaparte. Coleridge told how he and Wordsworth walked out at two in the morning to meet the Keswick carrier with the newspaper, and their neighbour, John Wilson—like Landor, then a moneyed young man of literary inclinations—thought of going to Spain as a volunteer. Perhaps he was inspired with the idea on hearing from Southey of Landor's example.

For, early in August, Landor wrote to Southey from Falmouth:

> Nothing I do, whether wise or foolish, will create much surprise in those who know my character. I am going to Spain. In three days I shall have sailed.

One evening at Brighton he had "preached a crusade" to two of Ianthe's countrymen, named O'Hara and Fitzgerald, and the three agreed to go out together as volunteers in the Spanish cause. Apparently it was at this time that he brought his affair with Ianthe to a crisis, demanding that either she should throw

in her lot with him or make a break, and on her persistence in evasion, wrote:

> O fond, but fickle and untrue,
> Ianthe take my last adieu.

To Southey, declaring that "I hope to join the Spanish army immediately on my landing; and I wish only to fight as a private soldier," he added, "There is nothing in this unless it could be known what I have left for it, and, having left, have lost." Pitying himself for his solitary lot, he visited his spleen on the race he had hated since his Paris visit:

> May every Frenchman out of France perish! May the Spaniards not spare one! No calamities can chain them down from their cursed monkey-tricks; no generosity can bring back to their remembrance that a little while since they mimicked, till they really thought themselves, free men. Detestable race, profaners of republicanism—since the earth will not open to swallow them all up, may even kings partake in the glory of their utter extermination!

Landor in 1808 was moved by Buonaparte's policy of greedy aggrandisement to much the same emotions as those aroused in liberal thinkers of the nineteen-thirties by the misfortunes of Spain, of Abyssinia, Austria, and Czecho-Slovakia.

Southey lost no time in hailing him as a hero, writing on 16th August to his brother in the navy:

> Landor has gone to Spain! to fight as a private in the Spanish army, and he has found two Englishmen to go with him. A noble fellow! This is something like the days of old, as we poets and romancers represent them; something like the best part of chivalry: old honours, old generosity, old heroism, are reviving, and the cancer of that nation is stopped, I believe and fully trust, now and for ever. A man like Landor cannot long remain without command; and, of all things in this world, I should most rejoice to hear that King Joseph had fallen into his hands;—he would infallibly hang him on the nearest tree, first, as a Buonaparte by blood; secondly as a Frenchman by adoption; thirdly as a king by trade.

Landor sailed from Falmouth about three weeks after Henry Crabb Robinson had left the same port for Spain as war correspondent to the *Times*. Like Robinson, he landed at Corunna, and immediately gave the governor ten thousand reals for the relief of Venturada, which had been sacked by the French. He announced his intention of enlisting under General Blake, an Irish soldier of fortune who was second in command of the Spanish army under Cuesta, and made an offer to pay for the equipment of a thousand volunteers to march with them on foot and to fight along with them in defence of religion and liberty. The supreme council of Castile accepted his money, with compliments upon "his generosity, his valour, and his honourable enthusiasm." His troop was raised. But then ensued three months of tiresome waiting for the anticipated glory. The British government sent out a small force under Sir Arthur Wellesley—soon to become the great Duke of Wellington, but then reputed only an able officer successful on active service in India—but, as if afraid that Wellesley might take some decisive action, they superseded him with an old-fashioned officer who could be depended upon to do nothing and to take his orders from the governor of Gibraltar, Sir Hew Dalrymple.

For three months Landor waited fretfully for a decisive action, seeing little but sniping and guerilla skirmishing. He told Southey that he wished to have seen Madrid, but feared to go lest the long-expected battle might be fought in his absence. He went to Bilbao after the French had entered, and "had the satisfaction of serving three launches with powder and muskets, and of carrying on my shoulders six or seven miles a child too heavy for its exhausted mother." He narrowly escaped capture by the French, which "would have been exceedingly unpleasant," as he would have had to appeal to the British envoy at Corunna, with whom he had contrived to quarrel. He spent his time between Reynosa, Aguilar, and Santander, and beguiled the monotony of waiting during September by writing three letters to Riquelme, the brigadier commanding his division under Blake, which he had printed on his return to England by

Meyler, the publisher of the *Bath Herald*. The first letter dealt with a "means of supplying an adequate force of cavalry," the second "a view of parties in England, their errors and designs," the third a review of "our conduct at Ferrol, at Buenos Ayres, and at Cintra."

The unsatisfactory armistice called the Convention of Cintra roused a storm of indignation in England; there were public demonstrations of protest, and Wordsworth denounced the principles of the treaty in a pamphlet which De Quincey prepared for press. The government was rattled into setting up a board of inquiry, which made Dalrymple an unfortunate scapegoat, reprimanded him, and deprived him of his governorship. But the weak and hesitant conduct of affairs continued, inducing in January the disaster of Sir John Moore's retreat to Corunna.

"In the height of our indignation here at the infamy in Portugal," wrote Southey to Landor, "one of our first thoughts was what yours would be." Landor's loud derision of the vacillation and incompetence of the British authorities can be imagined. He joined violently with those who blamed John Hookham Frere, the British minister in Spain, for having led Moore to disaster by failing to keep him supplied with full information of the French movements. The conventional humbug of Frere's pious tributes to Moore's memory, after having roundly abused his conduct as a general, moved him to such scorn that he was reminded—"in some novel I have read, I believe in *Hugh Trevor* [by Thomas Holcroft]—of a curious flourish at the end of every letter from a knavish old steward to a foolish old master." For many years Frere nursed the smarting memory of Landor's criticism, and after the publication of the *Imaginary Conversations*, he vented his spleen in the satirical verses which are to be found in his collected works.

Landor had left Spain before Moore's unhappy end. He returned to England, disgusted with the bungling at Cintra, towards the end of November 1808. The Spanish government made him unctuous thanks for his "gallant personal service," as

well as for his munificent donations to the cause of Spanish freedom and independence, and King Ferdinand's minister sent him a commission appointing him to the honorary rank of Colonel in the Spanish army. When, some years later, Ferdinand restored the Jesuits in Spain, Landor characteristically returned his commission with a letter to the minister, saying he had served in the cause of Spanish liberty against Buonaparte, and could not continue, even nominally, in the service of "a worse perjurer and traitor."

CHAPTER IV

MARRIAGE

§ 1

On his return to England, Landor threw his energies into the development of his new estate at Llanthony. Southey was now urging him, as Rough had done eight years before, to "rouse himself and write," but he still felt that writing should occupy only a lesser part of his time and energies. Physically strong and active, he was in the prime of manhood, and though he had turned his back on the possibilities of a political career, he felt that his possession of wealth demanded that he should use his money to public advantage. He determined to become a model landowner, and to convert the picturesque vale of Llanthony into a little realm of prosperity at which wondering visitors would marvel as a practical experiment in Utopian achievement. Southey warned him that, "if you made yourself King of Crete, you would differ from a hundred other adventurers only in chronology, and in the course of a millennium or two, nothing more would be known of your conquest than what would be found in the stereotype Gebir prefixed as an account of the author." On the other hand, said Southey, "pour out your mind in a great poem, and you will exercise authority over the feelings and opinions of mankind as long as the language lasts." But Landor determined to find employment for his physical, as well as his intellectual, energies; he could write in the leisure left over from creating his ideal community at Llanthony.

The Tachbrook estate being entailed, an act of Parliament was necessary to effect its sale, and when Landor told him in January 1809 that he had a bill coming before the House of Commons, Southey offered him an introduction to his friend John Rickman, who was secretary to the Speaker. It does not appear, however, that Landor ever sought out Rickman—probably because he left all negotiations regarding the bill in the hands of his brother Henry and Charles Gabell, the Crickhowell solicitor who acted for him in purchasing Llanthony. The act was passed on the twentieth of May, 1809.

Between frequent visits to Llanthony, he resumed his old round of watering resorts, Clifton, Brighton, and principally, Bath. Following the publication of his *Letters to Riquelme*, it seems likely that he wrote frequent letters to the newspapers on political affairs, though research has so far failed to identify them. In April 1810 the government's attacks on the freedom of the press excited Landor to write some *Letters to Burdett*, when Sir Francis Burdett and Gale Jones were imprisoned for defiance and abuse of the government. About the same time his zeal for liberty inspired his publication of two Latin odes, *Ad Gustavum Regem* and *Ad Gustavum Exulem*, addressed to Gustavus IV of Sweden, whose reckless hatred of Buonaparte led in 1809 to his dethronement and replacement by an uncle, who ruled as the puppet of Buonaparte's marshal, Bernadotte. The whole country was seething with discontent against the weak policy with which the government opposed Buonaparte's repeated crimes of military aggression, and like all weak rulers, the government resorted to oppressive measures to prevent expression of criticism. William Cobbett soon followed Gale Jones to Newgate, Leigh Hunt and his brother were charged on the same grounds as Cobbett and saved from gaol by Brougham's eloquence, and even the respectable Perry of the *Morning Chronicle* was prosecuted for "seditious libel." Contributors to the political newspapers, therefore, insisted on such anonymity as even the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly* reviews adopted as their rule; editors and publishers had the right to

refuse publication of dangerous matter, and if they chose to run a risk, they had to take its consequences.

Landor thus followed fashion in publishing his work anonymously. He suffered annoyance at least once from the rumours invited by the practice of anonymity, when in 1808 gossip attributed to him the authorship of a lampoon called *Guy's Porridge Pot*, a lively satire in verse on Dr. Parr and his friends. Landor hastened to assure Parr that he was innocent of such gross and wanton treachery, and, as he afterwards told Southey, "Parr believed me instantly," for on 21st June 1808 Parr wrote:

> My excellent and dear friend, how could you give yourself the trouble of defending yourself to me against a Warwick rumour; or for one moment suppose me so completely sottish as to believe such an imputation against Walter Landor.

Forster flatly denied that Landor wrote the lampoon; his caution would not have allowed him to make a definite assertion without good reason and it seems that he obtained his information from Robert Landor. Robert possibly confessed to Forster that he himself was the author of *Guy's Porridge Pot*, for in the catalogue of Forster's library the work is listed under Robert's name, but tangible evidence remains in a letter from Robert to Henry Landor: "I am sorry for what you tell me about Shuckburgh; as to Jack Venour, I will finish Guy's Porridge Pot on my return for his sake."

A subsequent suggestion that Bertie Greatheed wrote the lampoon may be dismissed as merely idle supposition; as a close friend of Parr's, Greatheed was as unlikely to have committed such unprovoked treachery as Landor. But Robert, on his own confession, disliked Parr and bore him a grudge; he had also suited his political colour to the changing tone of the *Courier*, which by 1808 had assumed the guise of a ministerial organ. The only apparent reason why *Guy's Porridge Pot* should have been attributed to Landor was because it was printed at Oxford by Slatter and Munday, who had printed the revised *Gebir* and the Latin *Gebirus*—in the preparation of which for the

press Landor had been helped by Robert. The rumour probably arose from a whispered hint by the printers; they confided that the anonymous author was a gentleman named Landor, and the lampoon was immediately attributed to the better known brother, just as, years afterwards, Robert's *Fawn of Sertorius* was attributed to him.

While it is thus more than a racing certainty that Robert wrote *Guy's Porridge Pot*, the only evidence that his elder brother wrote in reply to it *The Dun Cow; An Hyper-Satirical Dialogue in Verse* appears in the sale catalogue of Parr's library, where a copy of the work is listed under Landor's name. Nevertheless, the compiler of the catalogue must have had some authority for ascribing *The Dun Cow* to Landor—possibly a manuscript note to that effect by Parr. If Landor wrote it, he did so before his expedition to Spain—probably in June 1808, in the heat of his annoyance at being thought the author of *Guy's Porridge Pot*. Published in 1808, it evoked a reply in the following year entitled *The Warwickshire Talents, alias Guy's Porridge Pot, with The Dun Cow Roasted Whole*. Perhaps it was to this that Landor referred when writing to his sister, "Bless Robin! What is he plotting at Oxford?" The joke of using the cloak of anonymity for journalistic masquerade was carried to the height of extravagance a few years later, when Wilson and Lockhart began their careers on *Blackwood's Magazine*.

But in the years following his return from Spain, Landor was in no mood for joking. The sight of Europe suffering under Buonaparte's mad lust for military glory, and of England under the pitiful mismanagement of the mediocrities in power, goaded him to his most savage indignation. Very likely he wrote many letters which no editor dared to print, like his review of Trotter's memoirs of Fox and the *Letters of Calvus*, which he printed at his own expense for want of another medium of publication. He hated Buonaparte with the burning indignation of an enlightened mind at the spectacle of the world at the mercy of a megalomaniac; he despised alike the mediocrity and

incapacity of those wielding the powers of government, and the system of democracy which enabled such men to assume such positions, while men of intellect and imagination struggled for a bare means of living. Finally he despised himself, and writhed under his self-contempt, because he was powerless even to raise a voice of protest beyond the hearing of his personal acquaintance. "As I never drink wine," he told Southey in bitter disgust, "I am forced every now and then to write half a dozen verses, that I may forget what is passing round about."

The wretched failure of the expedition to Walcheren caused him to invoke the "pale shades of gloomy Walcheren," and to heap abuse on Lord Castlereagh, the unpopular Secretary for War. He shared the popular hatred of Castlereagh, often reckoned the most unpopular statesman since Strafford, and even after his unhappy suicide, Landor reflected how his own exile was better

> Than roughly wear life's waning day
> On rotten forms with Castlereagh,
> Mid public men for private ends,
> A friend to foe, a foe to friends!

Canning, Croker, and Lord Melville all came under the lash of his savage philippics, and when he expressed his withering contempt for the traffic in titles, it was inspired by the elevation to the peerage of Nicholas Vansittart, who became chancellor of the exchequer after the assassination of Perceval in 1812.

> O country! how enricht! . . . in titles. . . .
> Splendid and cheap as penny-whistles.
> No banker's boy, no kitchen wench,
> But wears them. . . . Tonson, mother ffrench. . . .
> And why not thou, whom not a whit art
> Behind them in desert, Vansittart?

Such verses as these resemble Byron's, and possibly Landor felt a tendency to resume his old allegiance to Pope after the suc-

cess of *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. But he was before Byron in turning to poetic drama.

Seeking respite from fretfulness in writing verse, he decided in the autumn of 1810 to follow Southey's advice and pour out his mind in a poem. Southey was writing his *Roderick*, and regularly sending instalments for Landor's criticism; he became saturated in the subject, and with his first-hand knowledge of Spain fresh in his mind, his imagination was fired to begin his own version of the theme.

The plot follows the lines common in the heroic tragedy of Dryden's day; Count Julian, Spain's valorous general, goes over to the Moorish enemy to wreak vengeance on his King, Roderigo, for the seduction of his daughter Covilla. But Landor's *Count Julian* presents a psychological study so unrelievedly tragic that no practical dramatist of either Shakespeare's or Dryden's age would have considered submitting it for stage production. He had no knowledge of stage craft—"You would hardly imagine it," he confided to Southey, "I have not seen a play acted a dozen times in my life,"—and he followed the stilted classical tradition of Corneille, then more than a century out of date on the English stage. The action takes place off the stage, the drama is unfolded in the speeches of the characters, and no suggestion of comic relief appears to break the mounting tenor of the tragedy. Like the dramas of Shelley, Byron, Tennyson, and Browning, *Count Julian* is a play for the study, and could never be entertained as a practical stage proposition.

Landor thought otherwise. He wrote with the rapidity of enthusiasm; in one burst of forty hours he wrote a thousand lines. Normally his hours of work "were four or five together, after long walks, in which I brought before me the various characters, the very tones of their voices, their forms, complexions and step. In the daytime I laboured, and at night unburdened my mind, shedding many tears." Forster, Colvin, and all the echoing critics have virtually accused Landor of being a bad artist in *Count Julian;* conscious that the play never had a hope of success on the realistic stage, they sought to

explain this defect, while lavishing praise upon the beauty of poetical expression, by saying that the characters do not live. If it is read as a stage piece, from the stall of a dramatic critic, the characters do not and could not live on the stage; Landor himself realised this—though, in his ignorance of stage requirements, he ascribed the failing to lack of artistry in actors instead of to his own lack of skill as a playwright—when he told Southey that "Garrick himself, who was probably the greatest that ever lived, would not have recompensed me for the overthrow and ruin of my *Lear*." But if it is read as a narrative poem, with the imagination necessary to recreate the appropriate atmosphere and surroundings, the characters are vitally alive. It may be reasonably argued that this asks too much of the reader's imagination—that if Landor was not prepared to learn the technique of the theatre so that his characters could be interpreted by actors, he should have employed the descriptive art of the novelist or the narrative poet. The answer is that Landor was a potential novelist, though he never had the critical insight to suspect the fact nor the inclination to attempt the novelist's art. The *Imaginary Conversations* amply reveal that he possessed the master's touch in etching character, both in the original creativeness of the novelist and the imaginative recreativeness of the biographer. He wrote neither novels nor biography, because he possessed neither the patience nor inclination to acquire the art of either; he chose the form of dialogue as the most direct method of conveying his imagination's conceptions to paper. His characters appear lifelike and convincing against the plain curtain of the classical stage; the background has to be painted in by the reader's imagination. Hence Landor can never be read by more than the few, for imagination can be acquired from no academic syllabus.

Count Julian is not a play; it is, in fact, a series of imaginary conversations in verse. Alone of all Landor's critics, De Quincey realised the true limitations of Landor's art and appreciated the power of his genius in presenting his conceptions in spite of

his self-imposed handicap. For De Quincey himself possessed equally the gift of vivid imagination without the capacity for application necessary to the novelist or the biographer; he expressed in his "ecstasies" and passages of "impassioned prose" that which Landor expressed in dialogue. "Mr. Landor," he wrote, "is probably the one man in Europe that has adequately conceived the situation, the stern self-dependency, and the monumental misery of Count Julian."

> Metius Fuffetius, Alban traitor! that wert torn limb from limb by antagonist yet confederate chariots, thy tortures, seen by shuddering armies, were not comparable to the unseen tortures in Count Julian's mind; who—whether his treason prospered or not, whether his dear outraged daughter lived or died, whether his king were trampled in the dust by the horses of infidels or escaped as a wreck from the fiery struggle, whether his dear native Spain fell for ages under misbelieving hounds, or, combining her strength, tossed off *them*, but then also *himself*, with equal loathing from her shores—saw, as he looked out into the mighty darkness, and stretched out his penitential hands vainly for pity or for pardon, nothing but the blackness of ruin, and ruin that was too probably to career through centuries.

Read as De Quincey read *Count Julian*, it may be feelingly realised why Landor shed tears over its writing. For he not only so absorbed himself in his hero that he felt his emotions, but he visualised in Julian's nightmares about the ruin of his race his own burning resentment of the present plight of civilisation. The hated Buonaparte loomed in his mind when Julian described Roderigo as "him whose tyranny brought down the curse upon his people;" there was a parallel between Roderigo's proposal to put away the barren Egilona to wed young Covilla and Buonaparte's recent divorce from Josephine and marriage with the youthful Marie-Louise. Spain was apostrophised as

> Unconquerable land! unrival'd race!
> Whose bravery, too enduring, rues alike
> The power and weakness of accursed kings.

The scenes he had himself visited are described:

> in Aguilar,
> Impenetrable, marble-turreted,
> Surveying from aloft the limpid ford,
> The massive fane, the sylvan avenue;
> Whose hospitality I proved myself,
> A willing leader in no impious war
> When fame and freedom urged me. . . .

and

> In Reynosa's dry and thriftless dale,
> Unharvested beneath October moons,
> Among those frank and cordial villagers.

And in Julian's remarks on patriotism, he defined his own feelings at the indignities to which he saw his own country subjected by the "unworthy lords" of its government.

> All men with human feelings love their country . . .
> 'Tis the old mansion of their earliest friends,
> The chapel of their first and best devotions;
> When violence or perfidy invades,
> Or when unworthy lords hold wassail there,
> And wiser heads are drooping round its moats,
> At last they fix their steady and stiff eye
> There, there alone . . . stand while the trumpet blows,
> And view the hostile flames above its towers
> Spire, with a bitter and severe delight.

These topical allusions probably led Landor to hope that his play might stand some chance of popular success. When, at the end of January 1811, he finished its writing and sent the script to Southey, his old repugnance to submitting to criticism made him ask that Southey should "not whisper to any one that I have written a tragedy." But the sweetness of Southey's praise in his ears inspired hopes of which his pride prevented more than the barest hint to his friend. Southey thought the play too Greek for production on the modern stage, but shrewdly won-

dered if the fat part of Count Julian might lure the notorious vanity of John Philip Kemble into trying it out. Landor disliked the theatre—"I am not remarkably pure or chaste," he said, "but to hear generous and pathetic sentiments, and to behold generous and grand actions amidst the vulgar, hard-hearted language of prostitutes and lobby-loungers, not only takes away all my pleasure by the evident contrast, but seizes me with the most painful and insuperable disgust"—but the notion of seeing his work acted on the stage appealed to his vanity. So, on Southey's suggestion, he observed that "it really does appear to me" that the part of Julian was suited to Kemble. "I think now of the public taste precisely as I did when I wrote the first preface to *Gebir*," he said; "if *Count Julian* is endured, it will be because it is different from anything of the day, and not from any excellence." He had no illusions about the intelligence of the general public, but he did nourish a hope that the allegorical comparison with contemporary politics might be recognised.

But when, in May 1811, Southey said he was going to London and proposed submitting the script to Kemble, Landor's old horror of submitting his work to critical appraisal returned; his pride would not face the indignity of possible rejection.

> *Count Julian* shall never lie at the feet of Kemble. It must not be offered for representation. I will print it, and immediately. Give me your advice how this is to be done.

He evidently hoped that Southey would suggest offering it to his own publishers, but thinking that he intended to print it at his own expense, like his previous books, Southey took the question literally, and begged him to "print the tragedy in a volume with boarded covers, not as a pamphlet to be dog-leaved." Landor's pride would not allow him to explain what he really wanted of Southey, but his confidence in *Count Julian* as a salable proposition was such that he sent it to Southey's publisher, Longman, explaining that he did so because Southey had expressed a favourable opinion of it. Longman promptly

refused it, and to add to Landor's mortification, Longman still declined to publish it when he offered to pay for its printing. On 25th June Landor wrote from Llanthony to Southey:

> On receiving the last letter of Mr. Longman to this purport, I committed to the flames my tragedy of *Ferranti and Giulio*, with which I intended to surprise you, and am resolved that never verse of mine hereafter shall be committed to anything else. My literary career has been a very curious one. You cannot imagine how I feel relieved at laying down its burden, and abandoning this tissue of humiliations. I fancied I had at last acquired the right tone of tragedy, and was treading down at heel the shoes of Alfieri.

The tale of burning the manuscript of another unfinished tragedy was most likely no more than a theatrical gesture, for Landor carefully preserved the slightest scraps of his composition, as may be seen from the many verses disinterred after decades in drawers and cupboards to be printed in *Last Fruit* and *Dry Sticks*. But Southey knew Landor well enough to realise the overwhelming mortification his pride had suffered, and blamed himself for not having averted the causing of such distress to his friend. He sought to soften the blow by explaining that "the people at that house know nothing about books, except in the mere detail of trade; and the only thing which they would think of was, that single plays did not sell unless they were represented." Four months later, in October, he wrote to Landor that John Murray would publish *Count Julian* if Landor paid for the printing, but he would recommend an edition of only two hundred and fifty copies, "because this play would be highly admired by the few, but probably not popular, being too good for the many."

So *Count Julian* was published by Murray at *5s.6d.* in the new year of 1812. The name of the author did not appear, and the book was barely noticed. For some time Landor continued to dally with dramatic writing, and in June 1813 he sent Southey a draft of a comedy, *Ines de Castro*. Southey found that "the dialogue abounds with those felicities which flash from you in prose and verse, more than from any other writer,"

but "there is a want of incident and of probability" and the piece lacked "the condensation and strength which characterise Gebir and Count Julian." Landor did not risk again the humiliation of rejection; not till after another twenty years, when his fame as a prose writer insured attention for anything bearing his name, did he prepare for the press another volume of English verse, and then the fragments of both *Ferranti and Giulio* and *Ines* were included in the *Poems* of 1831.

§ 2

Apart from politics, Landor interpreted other feelings of his own in *Count Julian*. The anguish of Sisabert in thinking Covilla faithless reflects the emotions inspired by Ianthe's refusal to leave her husband for him.

> Fear me not now, Covilla! thou hast changed. . . .
> I am changed too. . . . I lived but where thou livedst,
> My very life was portioned off from thine.
> Upon the surface of thy happiness
> Day after day I gazed, I doted . . . there
> Was all I had, was all I coveted;
> So pure, serene, and boundless it appear'd:
> Yet, for we told each other every thought,
> Thou knowest well, if thou rememberest,
> At times I fear'd; as tho' some demon sent
> Suspicion without form into the world,
> To whisper unimaginable things.
> Then thy fond arguing banisht all but hope,
> Each wish, and every feeling, was with thine,
> Till I partook thy nature, and became
> Credulous and incredulous, like thee.
> We, who have met so alter'd, meet no more.
> Mountains and seas! ye are not separation;
> Death! thou dividest, but unitest too,
> In everlasting peace and faith sincere.
> Confiding love! where is thy resting-place!
> Where is thy truth Covilla! where! . . . go, go,
> I should adore thee and believe thee still.

Absorbed in his plans for an Utopian estate at Llanthony, he passionately desired to marry and settle. Soon after their acquaintance began, he had confided in Southey, writing on his return from Spain in November 1808:

> I believe I should have been a good and happy man if I had married. My heart is tender. I am fond of children and of talking childishly. I hate to travel even two stages. Never without pang do I leave the house where I was born. Even a short stay attaches me to any place. But, Southey, I love a woman who will never love me, and am beloved by one who never ought. I do not say I shall never be happy. I shall be often so, if I live; but I shall never be at rest. My evil genius drags me through existence against the current of my best inclinations. I have practised self-denial, because it gives me a momentary and false idea that I am firm; and I have done some other things not amiss, in compliance with my heart; but my most virtuous hopes and sentiments have uniformly led to misery, and I have never been happy but in consequence of some weakness or some vice.

Much significance has been read into the statement that he loved a woman who would never love him, and was loved by one who never ought. Colvin followed Forster in inferring that Landor pursued a series of illicit amours, forgetting that he was too fastidious by nature to value the possession of women who gave themselves lightly. Wheeler, unable to reconcile with Ianthe the description of either condition stated by Landor, doubted if Ianthe was the woman who selected the love verses in *Simonidea.* It seems simply that Landor referred only to Ianthe in his statement to Southey. He could not tell the virtuous Southey bluntly that his unhappiness arose from his failure to persuade a married woman to leave her husband, so he disguised the fact in a half-truth. He loved Ianthe, who would not love him well enough to give up for him her husband, home, and reputation, though she was prepared to go on loving him as an unfaithful wife.

In reply Southey counselled him from his own experience:

> Find out a woman whom you can esteem and love will grow more surely out of esteem, than esteem will out of love. . . . *Rest* is the object to be sought: there is no other way of obtaining it here where we have no convents, but by putting an end to all the hopes and fears to which the best hearts are the most subject.

Southey's advice embodied the philosophy of bourgeois morality, derived by inference from Christ's reply to the Pharisees as reported by St. Mark and St. Matthew. St. Paul knew that Christ's reply was dictated by the expediency of the moment, and represented only a superficial and partial solution of the problem of sex relations; he realised that Christ advocated monogamy to handicap profligacy and as the only means of supplying women with provision for their children in a capitalist state. Paul could not quiet his conscience to preach a political expedient as a moral principle, and compromised in his first epistle to the Corinthians by describing his own unmarried condition as the ideal state, while advising those who "cannot contain, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn." Obviously he meant by the ideal state a condition of enlightened culture in which the individual could be trusted with unfettered liberty and independence, man and woman meeting in free attraction, without the indignity of economic liability. But in the light of Christ's political expedient, Paul was interpreted literally; the Church of Rome assumed Paul's ideal state to be a condition of celibacy demanding complete abstention from sex indulgence, which, besides being unnatural, consigned the responsibility for the continuity of the human race to the inferior orders who found it "better to marry than to burn." So Christian civilisation came to be built on the unsound, because unnatural, basis of monogamy.

For a condition of comfort in the contemporary state of society, Southey's advice was therefore sound. He did not know that Landor had contemplated rebellion against society by attempting to seduce a married woman from her husband. He may have remembered that his advice had not brought happi-

ness to Coleridge, but if Sarah Coleridge was a sufficiently estimable woman, Coleridge was a weak and unsatisfactory person who had become a slave to drugs. Landor neither doped nor drank, and with all his peculiarities, possessed great force of character. Southey therefore surmised that he could subjugate by self-discipline the disturbing sexual emotions from which he was suffering, as he himself had done. He did not realise that genius flourishes to flower in the soil of emotional disturbance —that he condemned his own talents to the production of competent mediocrity by firmly regulating his life to a routine of settled tranquillity. He did clearly realise that such settled tranquillity was necessary for concentration on ceaseless regularity of work, and he thought that Landor, with his passions controlled, would be free to concentrate his energies on literary production. This desirable condition of rest could best be secured by marriage with a woman sharing his intellectual interests rather than appealing physically to his senses, who would obediently alleviate his sexual impulse when it was excited—usually by other women—and for whom affection would grow out of gratitude for her considerate ministrations. Rest could not come from a marriage of passion, for a wife passionately desired stimulates the sexual impulse, and when the husband becomes sated with possession, he falls the more readily susceptible to the charms of other women.

Southey's advice agreed with that of Landor's sister Elizabeth, and after his return from Spain, Landor set himself earnestly to search for a suitable wife. He drifted back to the feet of Ianthe at least for a brief spell—apparently in the summer of 1809—when he told Elizabeth that "the *heart* has had her picture taken," and though it was "not half so beautiful as she," he was moved by the occasion to write the verses beginning, "O thou whose happy pencil strays." He kept Elizabeth informed of his matrimonial prospects, and sent in letters to his mother such messages as "tell her that at present there is nothing interesting, not a soul." He paid court to several young women, but found none capable of inspiring such emotions as Ianthe,

and he wrote in tones of flippant cynicism to his sister. "I believe I am more in request here than I have ever been," he wrote once from Bath, "not for myself—we are not like wine, improvable with age—but for Frolic and Favourite, and Lanthony." But, he added, "Frolic and Favourite look prudent, and Lanthony is jealous of everything I *could* admire." Another time

> I went to Mrs. Wells's Ball and Supper. We had pines, peas, sparagus, strawberries, and at least sixty other good things! There were two tables. The ladies sat down first, the men attending them. When the ladies rose, they fell to—remember it was past one o'clock. They danced till six. Tell Robin—whom God preserve—that—God forgive me—there was ice enough to cover the Nieper and beauty enough to thaw it all, had any remained uneaten.

Llanthony occupied most of his attention, and when his house there was finished building, it would require a chatelaine. For two years he pursued the social round unavailingly. Then, at the end of January, 1811, when he was writing out the fair copy of *Count Julian* to send to Southey, he met a girl whom he determined to marry. In April he wrote to Southey,

> I have found a girl without a sixpence, and with very few accomplishments. She is pretty, graceful and good-tempered—three things indispensable to my happiness. Adieu, and congratulate me. I forgot to say that I have added thirty-five verses to scene ii of act 3.

About the same time he wrote to his mother:

> The name of my intended bride is Julia Thuillier. She has no pretensions of any kind, and her want of fortune was the very thing which determined me to marry her. I shall be sorry to leave Bath entirely, but when I have completed my house I must remain there.

After a four months' courtship, the wedding took place on 24th May. Few of Landor's friends were present, and several only heard of it after the event. Old Parr wrote his congratulations on June 7:

My heart would leap for joy if I saw both of you at my parsonage gate. . . . God bless you both! Walter, your genius and talents, your various and splendid attainments, your ardent affections, your high and heroic spirit, will ever command my admiration, and give me a lively interest in your happiness.

Sober Walter Birch received the news with some anxiety, fearing that Landor had rushed impetuously into marriage, and might too soon find leisure to repent of his rashness; diffidently he offered a word of warning, "Do not smile at me; but it is my belief that an excellent wife is seldom made perfect to our hands, but is in part the creation of the husband after marriage, the result of his character and behaviour acting upon her own." Landor probably not only smiled, but laughed his uproarious laugh, thinking the solemn warning characteristic of the boyhood friend whom they had dubbed "Sancty" at Rugby, but he wrote off at once that he valued Birch's "very kind and sensible letter, not only because it was written by one of the wisest and best among my friends, but by the earliest of them all."

I often feared I should be tempted to marry a woman of fortune, and particularly as my expenses in planting & other things have lately been very great. I have preserved so far the consistency of my character in this important point—it is uneven in others, but those are only the edges and extremities. You are right—that the character of women depends very much upon ourselves. We also, tho' of firmer texture, are moulded by others more than we are willing to allow. More people are good because they are happy, than happy because they are good. This is not however, the highest kind of goodness but it wears passably well, and always looks sleek.

Clearly Landor was not such a fool over his marriage as Forster inferred. His wife inspired him with no such passionate desire as Ianthe, but in his mood of thwarted longing for Ianthe, he realised that marriage with anybody else must be a makeshift. He therefore decided to follow Southey's advice—to marry without passion, and hope that affection would grow out of esteem. But he did not delude himself that he desired in a wife merely a ministrating housekeeper. He could not tolerate

the prospect of a plain face across the breakfast table, however affectionate and submissive its expression. He never spoke more truly of himself than when he said, in reference to Miss Seward, that he "preferred a pretty woman to a literary one." The beauty of Julia Thuillier appealed to his senses; she would grace his house and table, and excite admiration in any assembly. Her youth—she was only seventeen—appealed to his chivalry, and he knew himself well enough to realise that such an appeal was the surest and strongest hold upon his regard. To a woman of independent character and fortune he would have been unfaithful without a qualm, but a woman utterly dependent on him, without money of her own, morally and intellectually his inferior, so much his junior in years, would command a feeling of protective tenderness outlasting any emotion of passion or admiration.

CHAPTER V

SQUIRE BOYTHORN OF LLANTHONY

§ 1

LANDOR'S LETTER TO BIRCH on his marriage was dated from Llanthony on 25th June 1811. He had wasted no time on a travelling honeymoon; doubtless his young wife was as eager to see her husband's fine estate as he to show her the scope of his plans for its embellishment. His house, as he told Birch, was not yet finished:

> My house here has once been taken down, and has once fallen down of its own accord. I am building it again, and hope to complete it before the end of September. It is situated on the edge of a dingle, in which is a little rill of water, overshadowed by a vast variety of trees. I have a dining-room 28 by 22 and 14 feet high, drawing-room & library 18 square, six family bedrooms & six servants; but in the abbey—which is a quarter of a mile off, however—I can make up a few more beds, and there I intend to have all my offices. I shall live on very little—I should even if I were not obliged—I planted last year three hundred acres, and shall plant as many this.

The ruins of the house still stand, beside the little rill tumbling down the hillside, past the Abbey, to join the river Honddy in the valley. Locally it is known as the Sharple, or Sharpll, though this name does not appear to have been used by Landor; its back premises, deep in mud, seem to have served as a cattle hovel. Behind the building runs a grass-grown road,

crossing the rill by a bridge; the road leads nowhere, for it is the road begun and unfinished by Landor, which he apparently intended should run down from his house to the village of Cwmyoy, and above his house over the hill to communicate with the Herefordshire village of Longtown. Nobody will deny that he knew how to select the site of a house. The ruins stand at the foot of a steep fall of the Hatterell Hills, on which the little farmstead of Loxidge perches perilously on the left looking upwards. From his front door, Landor looked across the whole of the vale, and beyond the vale, a gap in the mountains opens up an endless view of the Usk valley.

Visitors to Llanthony will immediately realise how the sombre grandeur of its wild scenery appealed to Landor's imagination, to his moods of moroseness and his craving for solitude. Except that the winding lane to the Abbey, which leaves the Abergavenny-Hereford road by the ancient Skirrid Inn, now possesses a well-kept tarmac surface, the place is little altered from Landor's day. The Vale of Ewyas forms a narrow peninsula of Monmouthshire at the extreme north of the county; on the west the first ridge of the Black Mountains rises steeply to form the bleak and barren boundary of Brecknockshire, on the east the more richly tinted Hatterell Hills loom equally high to cut off the vale from Herefordshire. At the foot between the hills—running for several miles beside the lane, which continues past the Abbey to the hamlet of Capel-y-ffin, and thence becomes a mere track over the hills to the market town of Hay—rush and tumble the curiously dark though clear waters of the little river Honddy (Welsh *Honddu*, or black water), which swells to flood rapidly after rain, and is reputed one of the richest trout streams in Wales. It is about six miles from the Skirrid Inn to the Abbey; two miles after passing Llanvihangel Court, the impressive splendor of the vale appears to view, and nestling by the river on the right is the little village of Cwmyoy. The Queen's Head Inn, at the top of one of the two bye-lanes running down to Cwmyoy, provided one of the many causes of friction between Landor and his tenants.

Further along, the site of Landor's bridge at the Henllan may be located, shortly before reaching the entrance gate of Maes-y-berin farm (which Landor—who had his own way of spelling Welsh names, and mostly wrote "Lantony" with one *l* and no *h*—usually called "Marybaren"); little more than another mile brings one to the handful of cottages comprising Llanthony village.

The name of Llanthony is said to have been corrupted from *Landewi Nanthodeni*, or "the church of St. David upon the river Hodeni," for St. David, the patron saint of Wales, built a chapel there, to which he retired for periods of fasting in contemplation and quiet. At the Conquest, the manor came into the hands of the Norman Hugh de Lacy, a kinsman of whom was moved by the sombre beauty of the place to reflect on "the vanity and transience of the human life," to renounce the world, and to settle at Llanthony as a hermit. In collaboration with a monkish colleague, this Lacy built the Abbey (more properly, a priory), which was completed about 1115, some five years earlier than Llandaff Cathedral. The Abbey was then peopled by about forty monks, but their settlement there seems to have lasted no more than half a century. There survives a Latin manuscript, apparently written by one of the monks, who, while expressing delight in the natural beauty of the Abbey's surroundings, inveighs bitterly against the character of the local peasantry, whom he describes as "savage, without religion, thieves, and vagabonds, who viewed the establishment of a religious community with suspicion, and delighted more in feuds amongst themselves than in the practice of the arts of peace." The lawlessness and bloody quarrels of its natives earned for the vale the name of Ewyas, or Gwyas, meaning in Welsh "a place of battle." The monk of Llanthony records one occasion when a peasant and the women of his family took refuge at the Abbey from their neighbours, who pursued him into the sanctuary, and after a fight in the outer court, the women seized the monks' refectory, and were "not ashamed to sing and to profane that place with their light and effemi-

nate behaviour." The monks appealed to be removed from a place so lawless and dangerous, and the Bishop of Hereford secured them a grant of land near Gloucester, where they built themselves another priory.

At the dissolution of the monasteries, Henry VIII granted Llanthony to Sir Nicholas Arnold. The Arnolds were active persecutors of Roman Catholics, and John Arnold, M.P. for Monmouth, had his life attempted in 1680 by one, Giles, a native of Usk. John Arnold's son Nicholas sold the Llanthony and Llanvihangel estates in 1720 to Edward Harley, Earl of Oxford, son of Queen Anne's minister, who experienced much vexatious and expensive litigation for several years after the sale. The Harley family retained the estates till October 1799, when the manors of "Cwmyoy, Lantony, Stanton, Redcastle, Oldcastle, and Triley" were put up for public auction in forty-six lots at Abergavenny. Llanvihangel Court was purchased by Hugh Powell, an Abergavenny attorney, from whom it descended to the Rodney family, but there was no satisfactory bidding for the Cwmyoy and Llanthony lots, which were subsequently sold by private treaty to Colonel (afterward Sir) Mark Wood, M.P., of Gatton in Surrey. Wood presumably bought them as a speculation, for he never lived there, and he sold them, doubtless at a nice profit, to Landor in 1808.

Landor thus entered upon an inheritance of strife, and his experience was to be curiously similar to that of the monks who built the Abbey. In 1813 he wrote to Birch of the Llanthony peasantry with a bitterness reminiscent of the monk's nearly seven centuries before:

> These rascals have as great a hatred of a Saxon as their runaway forefathers had. I never shall cease to wish that Julius Caesar had utterly exterminated the whole race of Britons. I am convinced they are as irreclamable as Gypsies or Malays; they show themselves, on every occasion, hospitibus feros.

But when he first arrived, full of his plans, he was all enthusiastic optimism. He settled himself in rooms adjoining the Abbey,

now comprising the Llanthony Abbey Hotel. Two fields away he set the masons on building his house. He built a bridge over the Honddy to connect the farms on the Black Mountains side with Cwmyoy village, and started to make a new road. He set about planting hundreds of acres of woods, including a plantation of cedar of Lebanon, which, he told Southey, "will look magnificent on the mountains of Llanthony, unmixed with others; and perhaps there is not a spot on the earth where eight or ten thousand are to be seen together." On his return from Spain, he brought over Spanish sheep with which he thought to infuse a new strain into the local stock.

He must have felt some disappointment at his reception by the peasantry. Robert Landor told Forster how afterwards, at Tours, Landor received a joyous greeting when he went to do his shopping with the market-women, with whom his laughing jokes and compliments won him great popularity. But he found the Welsh sullen and unresponsive; illiterate, uncouth, and clannish, they regarded him with suspicion, as a foreigner. Instead of being won by his generosity, they prepared to take every advantage of his prodigality.

He placed the conduct of his affairs with implicit confidence in the hands of Charles Gabell, the Crickhowell solicitor who transacted his purchase of the estate from Sir Mark Wood. Gabell was hardly a rogue; he possessed the barest competence in his profession, and sufficiently appreciated his powers to have no higher ambition than to live comfortably on his country practice, dining and wining with the minor gentry and cutting a dash amongst the farmers' daughters. Landor seemed a fat pigeon for the plucking, and while he meditated no dishonesty likely to get him into trouble, he meant to make a good thing out of his prodigal client. The correspondence preserved by Baker Gabb, his successor as Landor's legal adviser, shows that Gabell gave contracts without getting estimates, that he neglected to collect rents and other dues from the tenants, and that he evinced notable reluctance to take any proceedings

against various petty malefactors. There are letters, too, suggesting that he neglected Landor's interests in accepting Sir Mark Wood's values of the lifeholds, and he certainly recommended to Landor a tenant for Trodrumon, one of the largest farms, who never paid a penny in rent. Gabell may be pictured the florid, vulgar type of good fellow, readily standing drinks to the farmers and tradesmen, and closing one eye when talking of his wealthy client, with the meaning, "I'm in on a good thing, and you can be in on it, too,—if you make it worth my while." Presumably he made a pleasing addition to his fees from commissions and kindred perquisites.

The three years between Landor's purchase of the estate and his marriage provided the period of sunshine during which Gabell and others made hay. Landor was far from blind to the fact that things were unsatisfactory. On his return from Spain he was furiously annoyed to find that a number of well-grown trees had been cut down without authority. Wanton cutting of trees was the worst of crimes in his eyes. "We recover from illness, we build palaces, we retain or change the features of the earth at pleasure—excepting that only! The whole of human life can never replace one bough." He found also that part of the Abbey ruins had been pulled down in his absence, though his instructions had been only to remove some new building distastefully erected beside the ruins by Sir Mark Wood. Local busybodies labelled him a vandal for this misfortune, yet he not only chose the site of his new house at a distance from the ruins, but sought permission from the bishop of the diocese to restore the Abbey chapel, with a view to its use as a school. He pointed out that "drunkenness, idleness, mischief, and revenge" were the prevailing characteristics of the local peasantry, and the bishop unctuously agreed with his plans for their education, but said that an act of Parliament would be necessary to carry out the restoration of the chapel. Landor replied that as he had recently had experience of such a measure over the settlement of his estate, he would be slow to repeat it, and his plans for the Abbey lapsed. In 1812 he had to seek an act of Parlia-

ment again to secure his right to enclose the waste land and commons on his estate; the business occupied eighteen months, and the costs charged by the Hereford barrister briefed for the transaction alone amounted to over a thousand pounds.

The first architect employed on building his house managed so ineptly that the winter found the structure in an unfinished state; presumably this was the occasion, as he related to Birch, when it fell down "of its own accord." In the summer of 1810 he wrote to Southey:

> In architects I have passed from a great scoundrel to a greater, a thing I thought impossible; and have been a whole year in making a farmhouse habitable. It is not half finished, and has cost already two thousand pounds. I think seriously of filling it with chips and straw and setting fire to it. Never was anything half so ugly, though there is not a brick or tile throughout. . . . The earth contains no race of human beings so totally vile and worthless as the Welsh. . . . I have expended in labour, within three years, eight thousand pounds amongst them, and yet they treat me as their greatest enemy.

Disheartened and aggrieved, he was tiring of being imposed upon and already giving Gabell instructions to demand arrears of rent and satisfaction for damage from the worst offenders. But he hoped that he might be rid of the abuses when he was settled in permanent residence, and this increased his eagerness to marry and settle down.

When he brought his bride to Llanthony in June 1811, his house was still only half finished, and they took up their quarters in the rooms adjoining the Abbey. His young wife cannot have been greatly impressed with her new home. "I live among ruins and rubbish," Landor told Southey, "and, what is infinitely worse, band boxes and luggage and broken chairs." He was angry that his wife was disappointed, angrier that she had cause for disappointment when he had paid extravagantly for comfort, and the signs of his frayed temper appeared in his abuse to Southey of the presence of "nightingales and glowworms in my valley." He always abominated nightingales as

disturbers of his sleep, and finding him in this mood, Gabell and his lesser agents realised that the summer sunshine of easy pilfering was over, and prepared for stormy weather.

In the summer and early autumn of 1811, Landor found distraction in showing the beauties of Llanthony to visitors. His mother and sisters paid a visit, and Southey and his wife stayed three nights in August; he and Landor enjoyed each other's society with the intellectual sympathy and understanding rare between friends of the same sex, and both remembered the pleasure of this meeting many years afterwards, Southey when writing a preface to his collected poems, Landor in the epistle to Southey's son in *Last Fruit*. One of the largest farms wanted a tenant, and Landor decided to look beyond "the rascally Welsh" for one who would appreciate his plans and show gratitude for his generosity. Southey remembered that Mrs. Wordsworth's brother, Thomas Hutchinson—"an illiterate man, but a very worthy one, and a thoroughbred farmer, with money at command"—was looking for a farm. Hutchinson came to look at Llanthony, but he was too sound a farmer to waste his labour and money on such a speculative proposition. While he admitted that the soil was "the best possible," he objected that the vale was "too narrow, the hills too steep," and Landor would have trouble in building farm-houses, though he was ready to provide materials.

But Southey soon introduced another candidate. Among his correspondents was Matilda Betham, a busy bluestocking, assiduous in cultivating himself, Coleridge, and Charles Lamb. She was the eldest of a Suffolk parson's family of fourteen—"the measureless Bethams" Lamb called them in referring years afterwards to Landor's "Welsh annoyancers"—and it happened that one of her eight brothers had lately returned home from service in the East India Company, married a Norfolk farmer's daughter, and was looking for a farm in which to invest his wife's small capital. Southey wrote to her, quoting a letter in which Landor said:

I have several hundred acres to let instantly for a pound an acre, tithe free, extremely small parochial rates, a lease for twenty-one years, and after the first ten a rise of four shillings per acre. Many thousands of land to be enclosed at three shillings for the first 10 years, six for the remaining. A rail now forming (the Llanvihangel Railway, a horse tramway, was built in 1811–12) within a mile along a level to the market town. . . . I hope to get a scientific tenant for about 1600 acres. He shall have every encouragement, but he should have £6 or 7000.

Southey warned Miss Betham that Hutchinson had declined the tenancy, but told her that, if her brother was interested, he might use his name as an introduction to Landor.

Charles Betham went to Llanthony, his tenancy beginning in January 1812. Landor was prepared to welcome anybody who, like himself, was an alien to the clannish Welsh, and he welcomed the more heartily one introduced by Southey. He wrote so enthusiastically of Betham that Southey felt it necessary to deny any personal knowledge of him. "Your tenant Charles Betham is of an excellent stock," he wrote:

I have a great respect for one of his sisters, both for her genius and her goodness, both of which are soon discoverable thro a most unprepossessing exterior, & a nervousness of manner which gives at first an appearance of silliness. She happened to say in writing to me that her brother wanted a farm, as little expecting that I should direct him where to find one, as I was of such an enquiry from her. He has probably to learn farming; & in this respect is not so desirable a tenant as Mr. Hutchinson would have been: in others he is more so.

Betham's advantages over Hutchinson were purely social. He had the manners and appearance of a gentleman, and being almost contemporary in age, could be expected to share some of Landor's views and interests. He had also a young wife, who would be a boon in providing companionship for Landor's wife. In spite of Southey's caution, therefore, Landor received Betham as a friend, and behaved with such careless generosity as only friendship could expect. Betham wanted new outbuild-

ings, and Landor, having no ready money after his various outlays, told him to deduct the cost from his rent; he gave Betham some of his own stock, and allowed him the use of his own labourers and workmen. In his delight at having a fellow Englishman as an ally against the Welsh, he proposed that Betham's father should accept the livings of Cwmyoy and Llanthony, which were in his gift as lord of the manor and were then both held by old clergymen on the verge of retirement.

§ 2

Betham's arrival coincided with a lull in the gathering storm of Landor's troubles at Llanthony. Long years of war were oppressing the nation with an overwhelming burden of distress, and on 12th February 1812 Landor wrote to Southey:

> Three pounds of miserable bread costs two shillings at Abergavenny. The poor barbarous creatures in my parish have actually ceased to be mischievous, they are so miserable. We can find them employment at present, at four-and-sixpence a day; yet nothing can solace them for their difficulty in procuring bread. All my hay is spoilt. This is always worth a day's meal to them, but it can happen only once in the season. The poor devils are much to be pitied, for they really look now as if they hardly enjoyed it. It is their moulting time, and they cannot crow.

By his house-building, road-making, draining, planting, sheep-breeding, he created employment to relieve local distress—even, as events proved, to the extent of ruining his private fortune. He was also prepared to risk ruin and imprisonment by writing criticism of the government, which threatened suppression of free speech in the pretended interests of its war effort.

John Murray had published some memoirs of Charles James Fox by Fox's former secretary, Trotter, and knowing that Landor, from his association with Adair and Parr, had private knowledge of Fox's political life, he readily agreed, when

Landor proposed to write and pay for a commentary on the book, to publish such an advertisement of his own publication. In December 1811—the same month as Canning and his friend Ellis reviewed Trotter's book in the *Quarterly*—Murray included in his list of forthcoming publications an anonymous *Appendix to Mr. Trotter's Memoirs of Mr. Fox*, as an eightpenny pamphlet. Murray had not looked at the manuscript; he was unaware that the pamphlet was dedicated to President Madison of the United States, who was soon to declare war on Britain, and that it contained merciless comments on the reactionary elements in the government, with open abuse of "peevish petulant George Canning," and lesser personalities, including Rose, the treasurer of the Admiralty, and Fellowes, Landor's erstwhile despised acquaintance at Parr's. He was therefore appalled to receive a reader's report on the proofs from William Gifford, his chief literary adviser and editor of the *Quarterly*:

> I never read so rascally a thing as the Dedication. It is almost too bad for the Eatons and other publishers of mad democratic books. In the pamphlet itself there are many clever bits, but there is no taste and little judgment. His attacks on private men are very bad. Those on Mr. C. are too stupid to do much harm, or, indeed, any. The Dedication is the most abject piece of business that I ever read. It shows Landor to have a most rancorous and malicious heart. Nothing but a rooted hatred of his country could have made him dedicate his Jacobinical book to the most contemptible wretch that ever crept into authority, and whose only recommendation to him is his implacable enmity to his country. I think you might write to Southey; but I would not, on any account, have you publish such a scoundrel address.

Execrated in his day as the most malignant of literary critics and the most bigoted of Tory reactionaries, Gifford is now remembered only by Hazlitt's character of him in *The Spirit of the Age*, probably the most savage scourging of one professional critic by another. His remarks on Landor illustrate the grounds of some of Hazlitt's charges. "The tool of a crooked

policy," Gifford truly wore blinkers as a party hack. Because, in contrast with stupid government policy, Landor wished to avert imminent war with the United States and to conciliate the president of the youngest and most virile democracy, Gifford regarded him as hating his own country; because he disagreed with government policy, he accused him of rancour and malice. Ironically, he was himself notorious for "personal antipathy and rancour" in his writings, and his unctuous displeasure at Landor's "attacks on private men" afforded a case of pot and kettle—as an apology for "harsh criticism," Hazlitt remarked, "as Mr. Gifford assumes a right to say what he pleases of others, they may be allowed to speak the truth of him!"

Murray, flustered, followed Gifford's advice and appealed to Southey, who wrote to Landor on 10th February 1812:

About an hour ago came a parcel to me from Murray, containing among other things an unfinished commentary upon Trotter's book. Aut Landor, aut Diabolus. From the manner, from the force, from the vehemence, I concluded it must be yours, even before I fell upon the passage respecting Spain which proves that it was yours. I could not lie down this night with an easy conscience if I did not beseech you to suspend the publication till you have cancelled some passages: that attack upon Fellowes might bring you into a court of justice; and there are some others which would have the more painful effect of making you regret that you had written them. . . . Tomorrow I will point out every passage which is likely to inflict undeserved pain upon others, and therefore recoil upon yourself. It would grieve me to have the book supprest, or to have it appear as it is. It is yours and yours all over. . . .

To this tactful handling Landor responded by promising to "do precisely as you recommend," but while he was prepared to delete personalities, he stoutly defended his main thesis:

I praised Hastings, and drew a comparison between him and Fox; but, said I, possibly this great ruler may have been deaf to the voices of misery and of justice. I drew a comparison also between Lord Peterboro' and Lord Wellington, in which I *proved* the latter to be equal to the other. In short, with reference to the

military administration, I preferred the present to every other in this reign except Lord Chatham's. But I asked myself what source of corruption these Percevals and people had cut off? What protection they had given to freedom or to literature? After all, who will read anything I write? One enemy, an adept in bookery and reviewship, can without talents and without industry suppress in a great degree all my labours, as easily as a mischievous boy could crush with a roller a whole bed of crocuses. I am surprised that Murray should object to publish my dedication to the president of the United States. It is very temperate, and, I believe, not ineloquent. War is not declared; and I earnestly point out the mischief it would do America; how deplorable that freemen should contend with freemen, and diminish a number already so reduced! I never wrote anything better.

In reply Southey assembled a battery of reactionary arguments, only relieved by praise of Landor's prose as having "the poignancy of champagne, and the body of English October;" he defended Canning and Rose, and declared the Spanish colonies of South America, for whose independence Landor appealed to President Madison, to be "even more unfit for independence than the Americans were, who have become independent (by our fault most assuredly) a full century before they were of age." Preparing Landor for Murray's backsliding, he observed that "the dedication and the postscript are so full of perilous matter that it will be difficult to weed them clean," as "they, far more than the Commentary itself, tend to produce that state of feeling which such wretches as Cobbett are continually labouring to excite and inflame for the worst purposes."

If he had known of Gifford's imputation of servility, Landor could not have defended his dedication with finer courage.

I pray fervently to God that no part of America may be desolated; that her wildernesses may be the bowers and arbours of liberty; that the present restrictions on her commerce may have no other effect than to destroy the cursed trafficking and tricking which debases the brood worse than felonies and larcenies; and that nothing may divert their attention from their own immense neighbourhood, or from the determination of helping to set free

every town and village of their continent! To accomplish this end I would throw myself at the feet of Madison, and implore till I were hoarse with imploring him.

In his view, "a civil war (and ours would be one) is so detestable a thing as never to be countenanced or pardoned," but as no British statesman had the courage to appeal in the name of humanity to the American president to avert the coming war, a Tory bookseller could not be blamed for fearing to publish such an exhortation. Without waiting for Landor's reply to his arguments, Southey wrote a third letter to announce Murray's wish to be relieved of his obligation to publish the commentary. The pamphlet was suppressed; one copy survived in Southey's possession, to pass into the hands of Monckton Milnes and finally to provide copy for a reprint by Stephen Wheeler in 1907.

Landor preferred suppression to emasculation of his script. Defiantly he declared that he would not "cease to uphold" the revolutionising of South America and the cause of Wellington against petty detractors. His reading of Erasmus's correspondence moved him to reflect "How infinitely more freedom, as well as more learning, was there in those days than in ours! yet establishments of every kind were in much greater danger of innovation." Two reforms he demanded were "perfect equality in all religionists as to their competency in civil employments," and recognition that "there is no libel without falsehood."

> Unless these rights are admitted and established, I think it a matter of utter indifference who governs. I confess I care not how fast that system runs to ruin which opposes them.

In his disgust with both parties, Whig and Tory, he announced, "I am about to borrow five thousand pounds that I may establish a press, for the purpose, at much private loss, disquiet, and danger, of setting the public mind more erect, and throwing the two factions into the dust."

This announcement excited anxiety for Landor's safety in Southey, whose party associations informed him what oppressive measures the government was prepared to take to suppress criticism of its incompetence and dishonesty under the pretence of prosecuting the campaign against Napoleon. Within a few months, Shelley shared Landor's fate, his publisher suppressing a pamphlet attacking Chief Justice Ellenborough's sentence on Eaton for printing Tom Paine's *Age of Reason*, while a Barnstaple billposter, whom he employed to distribute leaflets of a "Declaration of Rights," was sentenced to a fine of two hundred pounds or six months' imprisonment. Popular opinion had compelled the release of Sir Francis Burdett, who, as champion of liberty, was hailed as "Westminster's pride and England's hope," but the government found excuse for a renewal of oppressive measures in Prime Minister Perceval's assassination in May 1812. Soon Leigh Hunt and his brother were editing the *Examiner* from the confines of Horsemonger Lane gaol, and a Liberal peer declared in the House of Lords that "the *Courier* and other papers which support the ministry of the day may say whatever they please without fear of prosecution, whereas the *Examiner*, the *Independent Whig*, the *Statesman*, and papers that take the contrary line, are sure to be prosecuted for any expression that may be offensive to the ministry."

Rather than Southey's persuasions, inability to raise the necessary loan more probably prevented Landor's establishment of a seditious press at Llanthony, where private troubles distracted his attention from public affairs. The local folk were in cabal against him. Lifeholders encouraged their tenants to cut timber, but refused to allow Landor a tree, and did not scruple to lay violent hands on his servants as trespassers. He found it impossible to obtain his rents; those who had pleaded poverty, and successfully appealed to his generosity for delay of payment, continued to owe, and their neighbours, witnessing their successful imposition, followed their example. Architects, masons, and carpenters, employed by Gabell without

preliminary estimates on the plea of fluctuating wartime prices, presented enormous bills, and demanded their money without delay. Injustice always goaded Landor to frenzy, and he fumed at his anomalous position of being dunned on one side while he could not obtain his dues on the other, especially as both debtors and creditors pleaded the same excuse of poverty for their conduct. Having behaved with generous sympathy in allowing rents to run on, he found himself regarded as heartlessly mean when he delayed payment of outrageous overcharges; one solicitor, demanding payment of a charge disputed by Landor, wrote unctuously that "by withholding payment from a labouring man who has a family in these dear times you must be sensible of his privation." While Gabell procrastinated and counselled leniency, other attorneys readily took fees for sponsoring claims against Landor.

Exasperated by Gabell's delays and evasions, Landor seized an opportunity for reprisals on his own account. He discovered that one of the persecuting attorneys, John Price, had been guilty of sharp practice in dealing with a tenant farmer, and on being sworn a member of the grand jury at Monmouth assizes, he caused a sensation by interpreting the oath literally—being adjured to lay before the seat of justice any felony he knew to have been committed, he cited his charge against Price. Swallowing his astonishment at this breach of decorum, the learned judge decided to overlook the matter with discreet silence, but Landor persisted in intruding upon his complacence by having the evidence of his charge attested by a local magistrate, the Rev. J. W. Davies, of Court-y-Gollen, and enclosing it with a letter to the judge. When that dignitary refrained from reply, Landor wrote again:

> Among the things that I should have fancied could never be, is a judge refusing to investigate a felony when a grand juror, whom he had commanded to lay such matters before him, states the fact, and a magistrate brings the evidence. I acknowledge my error, and must atone for my presumption. But I really thought your

lordship was in earnest, seeing you, as I did, in the robes of justice, and hearing you speak in the name and with the authority of the laws.

Unable to move the judge and declining to leave the matter to be lost in a pigeonhole of Gabell's desk, he sought counsel's opinion as to whether he could indict his fellow jurors for not supporting his charge against Price, of which they all knew the facts as well as he did. After six weeks he received a reply from Mr. Henry Clifford, of Lincoln's Inn, acknowledging his letter "on the subject of a felony stated to have been committed on John Lewis of Coedypain."

I am at a loss to discover from that statement what blame attaches to the Grand Jury. It appears that no indictment was preferred and I do not conceive that they are bound to notice any charge unless brought before them by indictment supported upon oath. I know of no mode of proceeding now but by indictment at the sessions or assizes if you shall think either advisable. But it is impossible for me to interfere as this is the business of an attorney in its present stage not of a Barrister.

For this useful contribution to the game of legal finesse, Landor paid Mr. Clifford three guineas.

This Grand Jury affair followed the suppression of his *Commentary* as the second testimony to the rotten state of British democracy afforded to Landor during the dark year of 1812. There was yet a third. Years later, in the imaginary conversation between "Florentine, English Visitor, and Landor," he related how, "in the county where my chief estate lies, a waste and unprofitable one, but the third I believe in extent of any there, it was represented to me that the people were the most lawless in Great Britain; and the two most enlightened among the magistrates wished and exhorted me to become one." The two magistrates were the Rev. Davies and Hugh Powell, the Abergavenny lawyer who owned Llanvihangel Court, and they made the suggestion when Landor consulted them about his charge against Price. He accordingly applied

to the lord-lieutenant of the county, the sixth Duke of Beaufort—the same duke who was soon to figure without dignity in Harriette Wilson's *Memoirs* when extricating his son and heir from that lady's embraces. Apart from his application following immediately after his unconventional behaviour as a grand juror, Landor's radical opinions were unlikely to recommend him to the Tory duke, who replied tersely from Badminton on 28th August, "I beg leave to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and to express my regret that, at present, it is not in my power to comply with your request."

Landor wrote again that, since it was not the duke's pleasure to appoint him, he should appoint somebody else "of more information and more independence," as conditions at Llanthony demanded that a justice of the peace should reside in the neighbourhood. As he warned the duke, he wrote also to the Lord Chancellor. But the holder of that office was the first Earl of Eldon, the most hard-boiled Tory opponent of all reform and religious tolerance, in whose ears every word of enlightenment ever uttered by Landor must have sounded toned with treason. Having waited in vain for any acknowledgment from the woolsack, Landor composed in October one of those outspoken rebukes to humbug for which he became famous in later years. He said he had believed himself qualified to be a magistrate:

> I have constantly endeavoured, from my earliest youth, to acquire and disseminate knowledge. My property in the county is little short of 3000 £ a year, and capable of improvement to more than double that amount. . . . I have planted more than 70,000 oaks, and 300,000 other forest trees; and I shall not leave off till I have planted one million. . . . I have, at my own expense, done more service to the roads in a couple of years than all the nobility and gentlemen around me have done since the Conquest.

He thought that "what honour it will confer on the lord-lieutenant to have rejected the public and gratuitous services of such a man is worth his consideration rather than mine,"

and declared that he would never in future accept "anything whatever that can be given by ministers or by chancellors, not even the dignity of a country justice, the only honour or office I ever have solicited." He did not profess to possess the qualities "which have adapted the great statesmen of the day for the duties they so ably and disinterestedly fulfil," but Demosthenes, Machiavelli, Locke, and other philosophers

> may console me for the downfall of my hopes from that bright eminence to which none of them, in these times and in this country, would have attained; and for which my pursuits equally disqualify me. Here I have only occupied my hours with what lie beneath the notice of statesmen and governors: in pursuing, with fresh alacrity, the improvement of public roads, of which already I have completed, at my own expense, more than a distance of seven miles over mountains and precipices, and have made them better and much wider than the turnpike roads throughout the country; in relieving the wants and removing the ignorance of the poor; and in repressing, by personal influence rather than judicial severity, the excesses to which misery and idleness give rise. These things appear of little consequence to the rich and prosperous, but they are the causes why the rich and prosperous cease to be so; and if we refuse to look at them now, in the same point of view as humanity and religion see them in, they will have to be looked at hereafter from a position not only incompatible with leisure and quiet, *but far too close for safety.*

But for this rebuff, he might have offered himself as a parliamentary candidate at the general election of October 1812. But his wounded pride could not bear further hurt from defeat at the hands of Beaufort's brother, the Tory candidate, and he could have had small chance in a rural constituency when a big centre of trade depression like Liverpool rejected Brougham, not only for Canning, but for a military nonentity, as second member, who had no better credentials than being a supporter of the policy which had implemented the town's unemployment. He contented himself with issuing an address to the Monmouthshire freeholders, asking them to select a candidate of credentials superior to Lord Arthur Somerset's; when

this appeal failed of its purpose, he relieved his feelings in a poetical epistle to Southey, part of which was incorporated in the printed version of 1831 beginning "Let me sit down and muse by thee," while another version appeared in *Dry Sticks*.

§ 3

While his pride smarted from these rebuffs, his sense of injustice was fanned to burning indignation. Realising that he was to receive neither recognition from the ruling class nor gratitude from the labouring masses for the benefits he conferred upon the countryside, he began to suspect that he was regarded by both as a fool for his pains. As usual when he made up his mind to anything, he acted with wholesale energy. He demanded his accounts from Gabell; he demanded that immediate action should be taken against all debtors and malefactors. When Gabell continued his policy of evasion and procrastination, Landor began to act on his own account.

Tombes of Trodrumon, the tenant recommended by Gabell, had paid no rent. Landor sent a servant to demand it, with instructions not to leave till he received some satisfaction. Tombes assaulted the man, and locked him up till he was glad to escape with his bruises. Landor thereupon went himself to see Tombes, to tell him that he intended to sue him for arrears of rent and to prosecute him for "assault and false imprisonment" of his servant. Tombes was out, but his wife greeted Landor's ultimatum with a "torrent of abuse," and subsequently asserted that he had forced an entry into her house in her husband's absence, breaking the lock on the door to do so. Vainly Landor called the evidence of his servant and two carpenters working on the place to testify that he "knocked on the door twice," that he "never attempted to open it, much less to break it," and that he could not have opened the door, as he had his hat in one hand and his umbrella in the other. The foreman of the jury at the quarter sessions asked if he "had not levied a

distress on Tombes, & on hearing the answer, he smiled to the others, who immediately made up their minds. . . ." In disgust Landor wrote to Baker Gabb, "I presume it will be doing no good for *me* to proceed against Tombes . . . unless there is a special jury. . . . It will be in vain to prosecute Price, until an oath has any sanctity here."

The Tombes affair was the first transaction undertaken by Baker Gabb on Landor's behalf. When recommending Tombes, Gabell had promised to engage that his brother-in-law, one Gough, the manager of the Brecon Bank, would join with him as surety for Tombes, but Landor had never received any such guarantee, and realising the futility of expecting Gabell to secure any satisfaction from his *protégé*, he sought out another attorney. The Gabbs were an old family of the highest repute in Abergavenny; besides their hereditary practice as attorneys and stewards to the barony of Abergavenny, they were considerable landed proprietors in the district. The reigning Baker Gabb (1756–1821) resided over his office in Monk Street House in Abergavenny, and with him, possibly on his friend Davies's introduction, Landor at first corresponded. But, after the first four months, the elderly gentleman handed over Landor's complicated affairs to the conduct of his son, Baker Gabb Junior (1785–1858), who had become his father's partner in 1807 and was active in local affairs, having lately engineered the promotion of the Llanvihangel Railway. With young Gabb, Landor soon arrived at a degree of intimacy impossible with the father, for he was a pleasant young man moving in the highest social circle of the local gentry. After 5th April 1813, when Landor hoped "I shall have the pleasure of your company at dinner; we can give you a bed," he dropped the formal manner of addressing Gabb as "Sir," and ending "Yr. very obedt. Servt."; he wrote "My dear Sir," and ended "Yrs. very truly," or even "Yrs." and "Yrs. very sincerely." The correspondence preserved by the Gabb family begins with a note about Tombes on 27th November 1812, and ends with a letter from Swansea

postmarked 31st March 1814. Up to the latter date, nothing had happened to disturb their cordial relations; it was after Landor left England that he accused Gabb of misconduct of his affairs, and his spleen remained unabated for thirty years, for he wrote in September 1846:

> If the Devil, a mighty old Omnibus driver,
> Saw an Omnibus driving downhill to the river,
> And saved any couple to share his own cab,
> I do really think 'twould be Gabell and Gabb.

Gabell, by his negligence, his talent for perquisites, and his raffishness, deserved Landor's indignation, but Gabb was a man of respected position and integrity. The very qualities, however, which recommended him to Landor, may have proved him an inept choice to deal with Landor's litigious difficulties. He was young, and therefore eager to please and loth to offend; a gentleman by birth and breeding, he was more suited to the leisurely business of the family lawyer than to pitting his wits against the shrewd sharp practice of such specialists in litigation as Landor's tormentors.

In a letter to Gabb of 29th December 1812 Landor enumerated the lawsuits which had accumulated in Gabell's flaccid hands. Declaring that he had "invariably sought a compromise, where the aggression had not been violent or repeated," he added:

> My business having been so procrastinated is the reason why I have a mess of it on my hands, which, to persons who do not know the reason, must make me appear very litigious or very oppressive. Yet every one of these cases will prove both my forbearance, & (if a man may say it of himself) my liberality.

Plenty of evidence appears to support this claim. In one case, a small freeholder named Nicholas Hopkins had entered upon an agreement to sell his holding to Sir Mark Wood, who assigned

to Landor his rights in the contract. Pleading that he had been "taken unawares" by Wood, Hopkins begged Landor not to compel completion of the agreement, and Landor agreed to submit to an arbitration by two separate valuers. Gabell allowed negotiations to continue for three years, during which Hopkins successfully appealed to Landor that, pending the settlement, his tithes should not be increased. When Landor at last pressed for a settlement, Hopkins, on the advice of an Abergavenny attorney named Hugh Jones, renounced his contract.

Several suits arose from the vague titles of lifeholders and copyholders on the estate, which Gabell neglected to investigate at the time of Landor's purchase. A man named Prosser held his farm without any better title than having taken "possession on the death of another person of the same name." A notorious ruffian named Thomas refused to pay rent for the blacksmith's shop at the Henllan and the public house called the Queen's Head, impudently presuming on the lawyers' bungling over the changes of ownerships to assert that the properties were his own freeholds. Two farmers, Lewis Parry and David Powell, admitted breach of covenant in their leases and agreed to resign their farms, but when Gabell, with characteristic negligence, allowed the date for their surrender to pass unnoticed, they sought advice from an attorney named Spencer—"who," said Landor, "gains, as I understand, the best part of his livelihood from the poor ignorant people of this parish"—and were persuaded to resist Landor's claims.

Harassed by these irritations, Landor conceived a grievance against Sir Mark Wood for having sold him properties to which he had indistinct title. Wood met him fairly. In December 1812 he assured Gabell that he would "have no objection to give Mr. Landor all the power and authority which I possess to compel Hopkins to perform his undertaking, but I will not myself engage in litigation respecting a property so long ago disposed of." In the matter of the lifeholds, he agreed to the appointment of an independent arbitrator, though warning Gabell that "it is

merely involving Mr. Landor and myself into legal discussions from which neither of us can ever be benefited one shilling." When, in May 1813, Landor submitted the name of a barrister as arbitrator, Wood appealed to him personally to settle their differences by direct correspondence, because, he said, "I have a very great dislike to lawyers, provided they can be possibly dispensed with, and of all the pickpocket business of the profession, should we be so unfortunate as to fall into bad hands, a reference to a Lawyer is the very worst." The appeal of one gentleman to another won Landor, and no more was heard of his claims against Sir Mark Wood.

He could ruefully appreciate Wood's dislike of lawyers, for the hostilities of John Price, Hugh Jones, and Spencer raised the whole neighbourhood in arms against him. If such cases as those of Hopkins, Prosser, Parry, Powell, and Thomas could be defended, all the peasantry felt they might have some pickings out of the alien lord of the manor. Propaganda labelled Landor a tyrant, a foreign nabob seeking to oppress the righteous poor with the might of his unseemly wealth. A state of war was declared, and a man less physically courageous than Landor might have hesitated to go out without a bodyguard. Betham and other tenants advised him that Tombes, on being warned of eviction from Trodrumon, was going about uttering murderous threats against him, but only when the local gunsmith reported that Tombes had inquired for a pistol and bullets, and had given "an evasory and suspicious answer" on being asked what he wanted them for, did Landor calmly ask Gabb if there was sufficient evidence to punish him. Yet he refrained from exercising his right to have a distress warrant served on Tombes, contenting himself with dispossessing him at the end of his year's tenancy and resigning himself to the loss of a year's rent. After his eviction Tombes proclaimed his grievances in the taverns of Abergavenny till, within a few months, he drank himself to death, whereupon he was made a martyr by the locals, who fastened the responsibility for his untimely end on the tyrannous Landor.

John Thomas, the publican, was a type of the worst pest among the labouring classes—the mean and truculent illiterate who commits petty annoyances out of bravado to brag of his boldness in the taproom. An inveterate poacher, he supplied tackle to others for poaching. One night Landor followed him through the woods into the enclosures.

> He broke down the fence of my wood, & was in no foot-path. He stood before me with his arms folded & told me I had better not touch him. I instantly took him by the arm & swung him thro the hedge. I know not whether this is an assault—but if I catch him in my woods again, there shall be no doubt about the matter. . . . I have watched him every night since, and court an attack that I may have a memorable example. I trust I can punish the rascal for having a net. . . .

Thomas seized this occasion for instituting a suit for assault against Landor, who retaliated by prosecuting him for poaching. Landor had long vainly urged Gabell to demand rents from Thomas for the public house and the blacksmith's shop, but "Mr Gabell did not proceed against him," Landor told Gabb, "because, he said, it was a pity; the daughter is a very pretty girl." On 29th June 1813 Landor wrote: "After a thousand searches for the memorandum of Col Wood, which I mentioned to you as containing his acknowledged right to the Blacksmith's shop & the Public House, I have discovered it among some old papers which I threw aside." He added with characteristic violence: "I pray to God my right to seize these two houses may be decided this term."

But it does not appear that Gabb took action in the matter, and more than a century and a quarter later the signed agreement between John Thomas and Colonel Wood was found among the Gabb papers, wrapped in a cover endorsed by Gabb on receiving it from Landor. This may afford an instance of the negligence which Landor afterwards imputed to Gabb, for as late as January 1814 Landor was asking if he had "given notice" to Thomas for the blacksmith's shop and public house.

But meantime Gabb had more pressing business to undertake for Landor.

During his first year as tenant, Betham had been Landor's friend and partisan in troubles with the locals. Evidence appears that Betham sympathised with him in the affair of Price and the Grand Jury, and warned him of Tombes's threats against his life. The first suspicion of displeasure appeared when Betham bargained with Tombes for taking over the tenancy of Trodrumon; Landor afterwards told him that "on his leaving the farms, I did expect that you would apply to me about the terms of the lease, instead of holding it in spite of me." Tombes left in February 1813; a month later, instead of receiving, as he expected, the balance of Betham's rent less a sum spent on repairs, Landor was confronted with an account showing that he was indebted to Betham, who had lavished his landlord's credit to an amount far exceeding the sum of his annual rent. Gabb was sent for on 5th April to investigate the account, with the result that Landor, royally indignant at being imposed upon, made no bones about speaking his mind.

Betham thereupon became Landor's biggest bane; the Welsh were as gnats compared with his hornet's sting. Pressed for money in the previous autumn, Landor had cut down timber on Betham's land; as Betham proposed to plough the land where the woods had stood, he asked that Landor should require the purchasers of the timber to grub up the roots instead of merely cutting down the trees. Landor made the request, but the purchasers had not complied, and now Betham refused to allow the fallen timber to be removed till the roots had been grubbed up. When Landor sent his servants to seize the timber, Betham, in his own words, "met his hosts with very inferior numbers, armed as I could provide them, and maintained my ground." Landor brought an action to compel Betham to allow the removal of the timber, but meantime the purchasers withheld payment of the ready cash he badly needed.

In his determination to preserve the natural beauty of the estate, Landor cherished his meadows only less than his woods,

and inserted a clause in the tenancy agreements that no pasture should be broken up without his permission. Betham had subscribed to the agreement, but now ploughed up his meadows. Landor asserted "that you ploughed up the meadows for no other purpose than to break the covenant, and that you threatened to plough up others to force me into some accommodation," but Betham argued that his covenant required him to manage his farm according to the rules of good husbandry, and "such meadows as I have ploughed up . . . should be ploughed."

Betham had neglected requests to repair his hedges, so allowing his beasts to wander at large, and Landor lamented to Gabb on 23rd April that "I must bring an action at last."

> A whole year together he has neglected to repair the fences against 2 of my woods. 30 acres of thriving timber have in consequence been much injured; & will be ruined unless I make the fence. If I do, it appears, according to him, that I am liable to do so always. Yet, if I do not, I lose many thousand trees—more than *his* whole property will pay for.

When Betham drove sheep to graze on an adjoining farm, Landor put up a notice threatening action for trespass. Betham promptly tore down the notice, but Landor fixed up another before evening. Years later he must have related these exchanges to Dickens, for they tally completely with the exploits described by Boythorn.

Betham, himself, following the example of his Welsh neighbours, contrived that his annoyances should be of a nature defensible by a crafty attorney's twisting of the law. But with him lived a younger brother, Frederick, aged twenty-one, who had sailed under the flag of the East India Company—the Betham family historian dignified him with the rank of midshipman, without explaining how such an officer belonged to the merchant service—and left the sea to learn farming after his brother Charles's marriage had made it possible. Released from ship discipline and in no hurry to tackle the business of life, he posed as a lively young gent, and so long as he paid for rounds of beer, knowing winks and leers flattered him into believing

himself a gallant robber of hearts among the peasant wenches. In the war between his brother and Landor he saw scope for adventurous fun and enlarging his reputation as a bold buccaneer. Doubtless he was in the forefront of the battle over the timber; certainly he was loud in expressions of aggression, and probably inspired by sneers to boast that he dared to repeat in Landor's face what he blustered behind his back, he behaved with boorish rudeness. The dignity for which Landor was justly admired in his finer moods appeared in his letter to Charles Betham of 30th July 1813:

I should be happy if I could acquit you of the disgraceful and scandalous act, of having my fences and trees destroyed. I can make suitable allowances for youth, for a limited understanding and a neglected education. But you appear to have enjoyed advantages in which your brothers have not partaken, and you are therefore without excuse. . . . The inconvenience you can make me suffer are small & temporary: those which you are bringing on yourself are ruinous and for life. I must not conceal from you that this breaking down of the fences and of the trees and the attack on the woman in the [word illegible] Hills is known to the chairman of the East India Company, & that circumstances are now in full proof which a little while ago were but suspected. No difference in respect to the tenure of the farm could authorise the rude and unmanly conduct of your brother, not only to me but to Mrs Landor, who has always treated him as if he were a gentleman. His education and rank in life do not permit me to chastise this insolence, but it is made known to those who will not suffer it to be forgotten. Nothing but a just indignation at such baseness would force me to remind you of those actions of mine which, from any man of honorable sentiments, would excite some sentiments of gratitude. You ought to remember that I always treated you with kindness till you ploughed up my meadows, after repeated expostulations—that, as you wished to have your family about you, I offered your father the next presentation to my two livings, after the decease of two men of seventy. . . . In fact, you cannot dissemble with yourself, whatever you may attempt with others, that the ploughing of the meadows was the first act of difference, & that I entreated you not to commit it—& that I cut down my woods that I might be able to accomodate you.

Unhappily he did not always maintain this dignity of demeanour, but allowed himself to be stung into impulsive explosions of spleen. Charles Betham disputed Landor's right to plant on one of his holdings; when Landor planted fir-trees there, Fred Betham promptly pulled them up, Landor thereupon issued a handbill:

FELONY! *Fifty Guineas Reward.*—

Whereas Frederick Betham, late an inferior mate in a merchant ship in the East India Company's service, did threaten, in the presence of several persons, at several times, that he would root up some fir trees in the plantation of W. S. Landor Esq.; and was seen, in the evening of Saturday the 15th of May, followed by a person with a spade or shovel; and the said trees were found about twenty minutes afterwards rooted up. Whoever will give such evidence against this F. Betham as may lead to his conviction, shall receive 50 Guineas as reward from me,

W. S. Landor

Llanthony Abbey, May 28, 1813.

According to Fred Betham's counsel in the libel suit brought on account of this handbill, Landor "condescended to become a bill-sticker," and was seen with one of his servants posting up the bill in the streets of Usk! He also, "in the Company of his amiable and elegant wife (walking with her whose presence ought to have softened his malice), distributed these bills about the streets of Monmouth—this, too, at the time of the Assizes, as the time of the Quarter Sessions had been chosen at Usk, merely because on these occasions the greater publicity could be given to the libel."

Meantime, financial embarrassments threatened. On 7th May he forwarded to Gabb a notice he had received from Mr. Jones of Leethroy, holder of the £10,000 mortgage raised on the estate, saying, "The fellow has been so impudent, I shall be glad to have nothing more to do with him. I hope 10,000 £ can be procured in London, as the security is founded on Act of Parliament." The next day he wrote a hasty scrawl, much

blotted and unsigned but bearing the Abergavenny postmark, to his brother Robert:

> Tomorrow I go to prison, because [words illegible] chose rather that the 2,000 should remain in the hands of a Banker than pay off a mortgage, of which notice was given six months ago. . . . I have no method but giving a draft for the money. Neither the one nor the other will accept it. The whole parish knowing that I could pay the money.

On the 13th he wrote in reply to a further demand from the mortgagee's attorney, arguing that the interest was not yet due, and concluding, "I request, Sir, you will not have the assurance to write me any more letters, as I wish to have as little to do as possible with people in the lower classes of your profession." Unable to obtain his rents or payments for timber and farm produce, he had no ready money to meet his liabilities, and the banks—small private concerns of limited capital, struggling warily under wartime conditions—were reluctant to allow any overdraft. In January 1814 he accepted from a firm of Swansea bankers, on the security of his mortgaged estate, the offer of a loan of £2,800, on which he was to pay interest of £400 a year.

By August 1813 his creditors and tormentors together had rendered untenable his residence at Llanthony. "I never can be happy here, or comfortable, or at peace," he told Southey.

> I live in my house merely to keep it dry, just as a man would live in a dog-kennel to guard his house. I hate and detest the very features of the country, so much vexation have I experienced in it. I wish to God I could exchange it for a house in Bath, or anywhere.

He afterwards declared that he lived only five months in the house he built at Llanthony, and these must have covered the summer of 1813, for he wrote in May to Walter Birch:

> I have not completed my poor miserable house yet, but I have a spare bed, or shall have till the second of August [Southey was then to have paid a second visit to Llanthony, but was prevented

by family bereavement]. If his Lordship should come afterwards, I have only an attic for him. In fact I built my house as a batchelor. I have half a dozen rooms which grouse shooters could sleep in, & two large & handsome ones for Company. As I think no company better than a wife, I surrender one to her, reserving as is done in all leases, a right of entry.

"His Lordship" was the son and heir he so eagerly anticipated that, when he realised the impossibility of remaining at Llanthony, he proposed as soon as peace was concluded, to live in France for economy's sake and allow his fortune to accumulate for his children. On 1st August his brother Robert wrote to dissuade him from this idea. Asking how he could "voluntarily become the Subject of such a Tyrant" as Buonaparte, he pointed out how people would sneer at "this Apostle of Liberty, who passed so much of his life in praising it, who not only talked of it & wrote for it, but who gave his money, & risked his person to defend it, he has left his connexions, his property, his Country, & chosen to live under the most arbitrary Government in Europe." To this Landor might have replied, as he had written some months before to Southey, that he hated Buonaparte, "I execrate him: but I detest our own government worse," believing that the European "kings and governments are such fools and rascals that I wish from my soul Buonaparte may utterly extinguish all of them." But the rest of Robert's argument was irrefutable.

Why not enjoy yourself now? Why look so far forward & that for those, who at present are not in existence? It is making money of too much consequence, & time of too little. You will leave as good a fortune as you received, without anxiety or deprivation. Instead of shutting myself up at Lantony, I would take a pleasant House in a good neighborhood and live, after setting apart a quarter of my income for repairs, on the remainder. A Man, & particularly a Married Man risks everything by determining on solitude. Solitude influences the temper in one year, more than Society can in twenty, it creates habits and feelings the most dangerous, particularly to a warm & sensitive character. The Melancholy man becomes infinitely more Melancholy, & the proud man

more proud, that which was at first a rill, becomes a torent. . . . The more I observe, the more I am convinced that everything in life which is singular, is dangerous. You have now the happiness of others to consider, so take the safest road, which is the commonest. . . .

Perhaps in the last lines Landor recognised the echo of advice offered when he sought to persuade Ianthe to flout convention by running away with him. If Ianthe had been his wife, he would have needed no counsel to avoid solitude, and perhaps he shunned society because he feared the awakening of dissatisfaction with the shortcomings of his inexperienced young wife in an environment where he had witnessed Ianthe's worldly graces. In any case, the rebel in him recoiled against convention, and the old pricks of conscience, inciting the desire to deserve the praise and faith of such as Parr and Southey, forbade his being reconciled to wasting his talents in the commonplace life of a comfortable country squire.

Naturally his young wife protested against the prospect of leaving all her family and friends for exile in France; besides, as peace was not yet signed, that project remained in abeyance. But he had to leave Llanthony. Not only was he harassed by importunate creditors, but he found it expedient to hide his whereabouts to escape the service of a summons.

He feared the hostilities of the attorneys, John Price and Hugh Jones, throughout the summer. Price had sponsored the cause of Tombes, and after the latter had "killed himself by drinking brandy," on seeing Landor in the streets of Abergavenny, he asked loudly of a companion if he was "the person who murdered poor Tombes." On the advice of the friendly magistrate, Hugh Powell, Landor brought an action against Price, but "the jury were unanimously of opinion that he asked only for the sake of information, and found him not guilty." In spite of this, Landor told Gabb he was "resolved to prosecute Price out of the county," and on their meeting in Gabb's office, he so excited Price that Price "assaulted" him. This would seem to have supplied a sound case, but for some reason Gabb neg-

lected to proceed for some months, and as late as the following January Landor wrote in a tone of query:

> Of course you have long ago taken the necessary steps for the prosecution of Mr John Price for the attack on me in your office. This will go a good way in my favour, as a defence in the business of Mr Hugh Jones. . . .

Jones was a more subtle rogue than Price. He had managed the case of Hopkins, and when he took up the defence of John Thomas for poaching, he so instructed Thomas that Henry Price, the Hereford barrister employed by Landor, remarked that he ought to be indicted for conspiracy. Landor rashly repeated his barrister's remark to Jones's face, "treated him as he deserved," and had to face a criminal action. "The grand jury of course brought in a true bill," Landor told Southey, for, as he observed bitterly to Gabb, "Any bill brought against me would be found a true bill in this county, whatever might be the character of the accuser." Worried over the consequences of this action, Landor was instructing Gabb to exercise all possible means to appease Jones, when, late in September, he left Llanthony forever.

On 3rd October he wrote to Gabb from "Myrther-Tidvill"; on the 19th he wrote from Swansea, and the eighteen letters to Gabb between that date and 31st March 1814 bear the Swansea postmark. None bears any more definitive address than "Swansea", and it does not appear whether he and his wife stayed with friends or in lodgings. Mostly the letters deal with money matters. Jones of Leethroy threatened to recall his mortgage, and Landor's big worry was to raise another mortgage on Llanthony of £10,000. But he was also bothered for petty cash. He was pestered by a Bristol mason for a debt of £35, "which is so little I do hope to contrive to send it directly." On 2nd November he wrote, "I am now so totally without money that even if a letter comes I have not enough to pay the Postage," and asking Gabb to instruct one of his smaller tenants to bring over to Swansea his arrears of rent, added, "Tell him if he

will bring me five pounds I will excuse him all the remainder of the half year's rent." Gabb replied by sending two five pound notes, and with characteristic carelessness of whence the money was forthcoming, Landor soon began to use him as a cashier. "You will oblige me if you can send me two or three pounds to go on with," he writes once; and again, "Pray send me 5 £ as I have only 2 £ left." His naivety in business appears when, remarking that his rent day will be the most convenient for him to pay the mortgage interest, he writes with an air of business-like decision:

> In future I must insist on my tenants paying their rents on the day due. It is just as easy, when they know it is to be done.

Within a month of writing this, he was suggesting that one of his few promptly paying tenants should be persuaded to pay part of his rent a few weeks in advance—"he would probably do it for two or three guineas, which I would gladly give, for I have no money."

§ 4

During these months, when he was frequently worried for want of a few pounds in his pocket, it never occurred to him to supply the deficiency by earnings from his pen. Yet in the midst of financial worries and litigious warfare, he was busily at work. He re-drafted his comedy of *Ines de Castro*, then called *The Charitable Dowager*, and confided to Southey his eagerness to have it "both printed and acted," because, "if I can make my comedy worth ten pounds, I will send the money to an honest and generous man named Juan Santos de Mureta, whose property was destroyed by the French at Castro." Mureta, he explains, "received me hospitably when I found Bilbao in occupation of the French"; now that he was "perhaps ruined by those barbarians," he saw "no speedier way, little speed as there is in this, of sending him some money." He was also occupied with

the profitless composition of Latin verses, flattering himself that "my head rises to the shoulder of Robert Smith, and every other of the modern Latin poets is below my knee." He forgot that Southey, five years before, had adjured him: "If you will not write English, write Latin, and in God's name overcome that superstition about Robert Smith. When I consider what he is, it puts me out of all patience to think that the ghost of what he has been should overlay you like a nightmare." He now told Southey how

> Valpy, the printer, the greatest of all coxcombs, very much wished to print my Latin poems; but I have an intention to print them at Oxford, under the title of *Idyllia Heroum atque Heroidum*, in a size like the sixpenny books of children. It will cost me 35 £; and I intend to give whatever they sell for, which may amount to about half the money, to the poor of Leipzig.

The needy Leipzigers had to wait for his charity, for it was nearly another two years before the Oxford printers, Slatter and Munday, issued *Idyllia Nova Quinque Heroum atque Heroidum.*

His most important writings at this time were a series of letters addressed to the *Courier* under the pseudonym of Calvus. The *Courier*, like the *Times*, opposed the policy of making peace with Buonaparte, while the more conventional *Morning Post* reviled them for "existing only on the misery and quarrels of mankind." Nevertheless, the *Courier* hesitated to publish unexpurgated such downright expressions of opinion as Landor's letters, which were written between September and November of 1813, and in December secured their publication in pamphlet form through Henry Colburn (later the Mr. Bacon of Thackeray's *Pendennis*) as *Letters Addressed to Lord Liverpool, and the Parliament, on The Preliminaries of Peace.* The pamphlet was advertised in the *Courier* of 17th December, and reviewed in its issue of 12th January, with the remark that the letters were "originally sent to *The Courier* for insertion, and were only delayed by the pressure of parliamentary and foreign in-

telligence." Later, probably because it had no sale, Colburn bound up copies of the pamphlet in a volume of miscellanies called *Offerings to Buonaparte.*

Landor's trend of thought during the terrorism of Buonaparte ran curiously parallel with that of intellectual opinion during European events of the year 1935 to 1939. He had always been an advanced Liberal, a Jacobin. He loathed war, but he had readily taken up arms in person in the cause of the Spanish people against oppression. He now appealed against the timid policy of patching up a peace with Buonaparte. "To engage in war," he wrote, "with so futile a design as merely to bind at last an atheist with an oath, and an assassin with a piece of red tape, is as foolish and as wicked as to discharge a cannon into a crowded market place for a jubilee." He demanded the continuance of the war to effect the extinction of "the monster" Buonaparte, and addressed his demand as a private person entitled to justice and reason from the nation's rulers.

> I never wrote a pamphlet: I belong to no party, no faction, no club, no coterie; I possess no seat in Parliament, by brevet or by purchase; I can afford to live without it; but I cannot afford that accumulation of taxes which will arise from another war, if after our experience we conclude another probationary peace.

Nor did he hold a candle to the humbug that the French people were objects of commiseration as the pitiable dupes of a maniac leader, and that the removal of Buonaparte would alone procure peace. Quoting Castlereagh's unctuous statement that "we are not to meddle with that great and powerful country itself," he scornfully demanded, "Why not? Has not that great and powerful country meddled with every other? Is she not great and powerful because she has done so?"

Southey warmly agreed with Landor's views. He wrote to his brother:

> You have seen the letters in the *Courier* with the signature of Calvus? Landor is the writer. I entirely agree with him that this is the time for undoing the mischief done by the Peace of Utrecht,

France was then made too strong for the repose of Europe, and she ought now to be stript of Alsace, Lorraine and Franche-Comté.

Prudent regard for the policy of the government to which he owed his appointment as Poet Laureate compelled Southey to suppress reference to Buonaparte in his official ode in celebration of the new year, but he salved his conscience by publishing in the *Courier* the lines beginning, "Who calls for peace at this momentous hour?" And he reminded Landor how for five years he had been "preaching the policy, the duty, the necessity of declaring Bonaparte under the ban of human nature"; he believed that, if the government had openly avowed such a policy, other countries would have followed the lead, and the French themselves would by then have cast out the tyrant.

The government's vacillations and vicissitudes between 1808 and 1814 find reflection in events of 1935 to 1939 with the derisive mockery of a distorting mirror. Landor would have laughed savagely to see how subsequent statesmen copied the blind folly of his contemporaries in ignoring the lessons of history. Complaining that rulers would endure any insult rather than listen to those who entreat them to look to history for a guide, Calvus gibed, "History would lead them into that chilly and awful chamber in which, under the suspended armour, they might read their own destinies."

§ 5

While writing these philippics, he was waiting impatiently for Gabb to obtain for him a loan of £3000 to relieve his immediate difficulties. Remembering the handsome fortune left by his father, it was difficult for his family and friends to realise how he had contrived to strand himself in such parlous straits. Such minor extravagances as his carriage and pair were well within his means; apart from a handsome collection of books and pictures, he had nothing to show for his vanished fortune. Everything had been spent on Llanthony; "all the money I ever

spent beyond my income was spent upon that," he told his brother Henry more than twenty years later—"my own expences never amounted in any year to a thousand pounds." After forty years, his prodigal outlay in planting showed signs of procuring its reward, and Landor must have felt a grim satisfaction when his brother Henry assured him in 1855 that "I do not know so desirable a property for investment & extention, & which if now sold would to your Successor's son (if he should have one) be a very great sacrifice of Property." But meantime for two decades the estate was burdened with the penalty of his misplaced confidence and unwise generosity. As late as 1834, Gabell, of whose negligence there is plenty of evidence, and one Francis Robbins, who became Landor's trusted agent after the dismissal of Henry Williams along with Gabell in 1812, were still receiving payments of interest on debts which they held to be owing to them.

Gabb's negotiations with a Mr. Moore for a loan broke down after more than three months, and in January 1814 Landor himself secured a loan of £2,800 from his Swansea bankers. The rate of interest was typical of his other financial transactions—"for 700 £", he told Gabb, "I pay 100 per ann." He also advertised for sale in the *Bath Herald* the next presentation to the perpetual curacies of Cwmyoy and Llanthony, and proposed to ask £1,200 for the two livings, which he reckoned to be worth £300 a year. These monies, with £1500 which Gabb assured him he would get from Betham, would clear his immediate necessities, which included instalments of purchase money on several farms he had bought to enlarge the original estate.

But apparently there were liabilities of which he omitted to notify Gabb till unpleasant reminders arrived. In February he received from Henry Price, the Hereford barrister, a lengthy account of expenses incurred between September 1812 and April 1813 in securing the act of parliament to enclose the waste land and commons at Llanthony. It is an illuminating document, revealing the law as a luxury tax on capital. Price

and his clerk spent "36 days in London attending Parliament to get the bill passed" at "2½ guineas per day exclusive of expenses"—for himself £94.10*s.* and two guineas for the clerk, £75.12*s*; expenses for each at another guinea a day made another £75.12*s*. Price's junior and his clerk then spent another twenty-four days waiting for the bill to receive the royal assent at a cost of £163.16*s*. The statement shows that Landor had already paid £850, but there still remained a balance due of £196.15*s*.2*d*. Explosively Landor wrote to Gabb:

> He [Price] said that six hundred or perhaps less would do, provided no opposition was made & no counsel employed. He also promised me that he would engage to do it on as easy terms as any one could, and that he could do so, by saving me the expense of a solicitor. This being the case, unless I am obliged by a court of justice, I will not pay him one farthing more.

He did, however, send Price a further hundred pounds, remarking acidly that he "thought 2 guineas a day very handsome pay for his young man, as gentlemen of high rank in the army had not so much."

Litigation, like a spider, held him in its web. He was still urging Gabb to proceed against Thomas for possession of the blacksmith's shop and the Queen's Head tavern, as well as "in the business of the Bethams and of John Price, the one in the Exchequer, the other in the Ct. of Kings Bench." His friend Davies, of Court-y-Gollen, sent him a list of poachers supplied by the gamekeeper at Llanthony, and recommended him to "order them all in the Crown Office for the pursuit & killing of game," as "the only way of insuring you *your Prerogative* and *a future Peace* on that Head." The names of the nefarious Thomas and Charles Betham appeared on the list, but Landor was vindictively disappointed "not to observe the name of Frederick Betham."

Davies wrote in sincere terms of cordial friendship. "You seem," he said, "to be encircled with Enemies, who, I shall hope, will yet be defeated by Perseverance, Caution, & Pru-

dence." He and Hugh Powell, the squire of Llanvihangel, seem to have been the only inhabitants of Monmouthshire whom Landor had reason to remember without regrets. The last of his letters to Gabb expressed his obligation to the kindness of Powell and his brother in their efforts on his behalf to effect a compromise with Hugh Jones. This letter was posted from Swansea on 31st March 1814, by which time he recognised his financial position to be much more precarious than he had supposed in January, though he still hoped to resolve its difficulties. If, he told Gabb, he could obtain the agreed price for the timber which Betham had wrongfully withheld from removal, "and sell the oaks, my books, wine and part of the furniture, *as well as the livings*, I shall not want above 1200 £—and surely the Joneses wd. let that remain upon annuity." He had not been able to transfer the mortgage from Jones, but he now planned to sell his life interest in Llanthony—a Quaker was going over in a few days to look at the estate.

Apparently the Quaker was insufficiently impressed. The anticipated sale of the livings also fell through, and it appears from correspondence twenty years after that Landor actually sold the presentation to Llanthony for only £75. The purchaser of the timber backed out of his bargain. Finally, as Landor reminded Gabb in his letter, in calculating his assets he reckoned on securing his rent from Betham, and this proved to be not forthcoming.

In April the Bethams presented two libel suits against him at Monmouth assizes before Mr. Justice Dallas and a special jury. In the first, Fred Betham was awarded damages of a hundred pounds for Landor's publication of the felony handbill. Landor himself did not appeal, and his counsel, Dauncey, admitted the handbill to be libellous, though he proposed that, "in the absence of his client and exercising no judgment of his own, he should, in compliance with his client's instructions, state and prove the circumstances under which it was published." Charles Betham sued for damages for a libel "in the form of a written order, given by Mr. Landor to a constable, he not being a mag-

istrate, to apprehend the plaintiff, on a charge of felony and theft." The constable gave evidence that he never executed the order, but the judge ruled that, while "the publication of this libel appeared to have been very limited, . . . at the same time a charge of felony was conveyed by it, without excuse or explanation," and the plaintiff received the verdict, with damages of forty shillings.

Stung by the injustice of both verdicts, Landor smarted still more from the derisive eloquence of Fred Betham's counsel, Thomas Jervis, in depicting him as "condescending to become a bill-sticker" and hawking his handbills about the Monmouth streets "in the company of his amiable and elegant wife." He accordingly published as a leaflet a *Letter from Mr. Landor to Mr. Jervis*, stating his case against the Bethams and demanding an apology from Jervis for his language; failing such apology, he would consider Jervis a calumniator wherever they might meet, except in those courts miscalled of justice, "where calumny is sanctioned by custom, and insolence has the protection of the laws." He was able to strengthen his hand in the tail of the letter by stating the result of his proceedings against Betham in the Court of Exchequer, which had "overruled the whole of their exceptions, dissolved the injunction, and awarded me every farthing of my demand, to the amount of £1,968.17*s.*6*d.*"

On 16th May Landor announced to Southey his intention to leave England. The brothers Powell had failed to conciliate Hugh Jones, and Landor was cited to be tried at Monmouth. "As I certainly shall not appear," he said, "I shall be outlawed." Before going he intended to spend three weeks with his mother at Warwick and Ipsley; he hoped to delay long enough for Jervis to decide whether or not to reply to his letter, and for Slatter and Munday to finish printing his Latin poems, which were to contain a chastisement of W. E. Taunton, who, as Charles Betham's counsel, had treated him "with much more violence than any criminal." But on 27th May he was about to embark from Weymouth when he wrote to Southey:

The Court of Exchequer has decided in my favour; but Betham has been able to promise bail and a replevy, so that the ends of justice are defeated. Nearly three years' rent will be due before I can receive one farthing from him; and all my timber is spoiled. I shall be utterly ruined. Not being able to pay the interest of 10,000 £ debt on the Llanthony estate, the mortgagee will instantly seize on it until he has paid himself the whole of the principal. The laws of England are made entirely for the protection of guilt. A creditor could imprison me for twenty pounds, while a man who owes me two thousand, and keeps me from the possession of two thousand more, can convert wealth and affluence into poverty and distress,—can, in short, drive me for ever from my native country and riot with impunity on the ruins of my estate. I had promised my mother to visit her. I never can hope to see her again. She is seventy-two, and her sorrow at my overwhelming and most unmerited misfortunes will too surely shorten her days. My wife, when she married, little thought she should leave all her friends to live in obscurity and perhaps in want. For my sake she refused one of the largest fortunes that any private gentleman possesses, and another person of distinguished rank. Whoever comes near me is either unhappy or ungrateful. There is no act of forbearance or of kindness which Betham did not receive from me. . . . I go to-morrow to St. Malo. In what part of France I shall end my days, I know not, but there I shall end them; and God grant that I may end them speedily, and so as to leave as little sorrow as possible to my friends. No time will alter my regard and veneration for you; nor shall anything lessen the kind sentiments you entertain for me. It is a great privilege to hold the hearts of the virtuous. If men in general knew how great it is, could they ever consent to abandon it? I am alone here. My wife follows me when I have found a place fit for her reception. Adieu.

§ 6

Jervis did not reply to Landor's letter, but Charles Betham did. His long statement of his disputes with Landor was dated from "Lantony Abbey, June 23rd 1814." Landor had left England four weeks before, and probably never saw it. Nor was it known to John Forster, who based his narrative of the

Llanthony troubles on Landor's letters to Southey and whatever reminiscences he related after thirty years, which evidently followed the lines of the *Epistle to a Barrister*, a satire in Swift's manner, addressed to W. E. Taunton, but relating the mischief of the Bethams and guying both Gabell and the two Gabbs—Gabell as "lathy lantern-visaged Crawle" with his "rich blacksmith's daughter," and the Gabbs as possessors of

> so rude a name
> It well deserves the sheet of shame. . . .

Betham's letter was discovered and reprinted by a descendant of his family in 1905 (*A House of Letters*, ed. Ernest Betham). His plausible explanations, delivered with a fine air of dignity and restraint, were accepted at their face value by the chronicler, who made play with Forster's unimaginative portrait of Landor as an irresponsible eccentric to suggest that Betham was the victimised, instead of the victimising, party. This view imposed upon even such a Landor scholar as Stephen Wheeler, who conceived that, by the unchecked evidence of this single letter, it was "clearly shown that Landor's account of his quarrels with members of the Betham family . . . differs widely from the facts, and that these were either unknown to or improperly ignored by Forster."

Landor's letters to Baker Gabb—which were unknown equally to Forster, the Betham chronicler, and Wheeler—reveal that Forster's account was rather less than just to Landor in attributing his troubles rather to his own incompetence and impetuosity than to misplaced confidence and unwise generosity. Received by Landor as a friend, Betham took every advantage of his unbusinesslike generosity, until, at the year's end, when Landor exploded angrily on realising from the accounts how his confidence had been abused, he condescended to the same weapon of annoyance as the lowest local peasantry —not only a guerilla warfare of petty harassment, but the shady chicanery of the law. Legally he was mostly in the right, apart from non-payment of his rent, which was the root

of all the trouble. For instance, the law, as he relates, was on his side in the dispute about the timber:

> The assertion that the Timber, which I prevented him from removing, was cut down to enable him to grant me indulgences, has already been made in a Bill of Equity against me and denied on my oath; I solemnly repeat that denial. I had consented to the trees being grubbed up, that I might plough the land; and when Mr. Landor cut them down, and refused to grub up the roots, I refused my permission to their being removed . . . by the same order which authorizes him to remove the trees, he is directed, without delay, to cause the roots and stools to be properly and effectually grubbed up; and I was awarded costs.

But the moral, apart from the legal, aspect of his conduct appears in Landor's letter to him of 30th July 1813:

> I have forborn, Sir, on all occasions to harass you; it was not harassing you to abstain from rent last September at your own request, in the presence of Mrs and Miss Betham, the want of which money obliged me to cut down the great wood and the Grove, together with a view to your further advantage in allowing it (as I should have done) to be ploughed. You yourself admitted the great importance it would be of to the farm, & happily you admitted it in the presence of a person who will give the fullest evidence of the fact, and *after a part of the Great Wood was cut down.* You requested me to apply to the purchasers of both woods to negotiate with them for grubbing up the trees instead of cutting them. I did so. . . .

Betham, in fact, begged the double favour of a postponement of his rent and an increase of his farm's arable value, and then used the law to compel Landor to pay for the labour of clearing the soil for him.

Landor's letter of 30th July 1813, already quoted in relation to Fred Betham's exploits, was written primarily to warn Betham against breaking a lock on his garden gate, Betham claiming a right of way through the garden apparently for the purpose of annoying Landor and his wife. "The act of violence you now threaten can do me no great injury," the

letter ended, "it is however, a violation of the law, which a copy of this letter, attested as it will be, must prove that I warned you not to commit." The copy, attested by a Llanthony tenant named Matthews, was lodged with Gabb, who preserved it with Landor's letters to him.

Betham's avoidance of any mention of this letter explodes his slight claim to ingenuousness. Relating how he filed a bill in Equity, offering to pay what he owed after a ruling on the accounts and meanwhile restraining Landor by injunction from suing him, he declared:

> This bill was filed on the 30th of June, and Mr. Landor served about the same time with a subpoena to appear and answer to it. No answer was given until February last. In the meantime, in November, I had offered to refer all the accounts to private arbitration. . . . Mr. L. declined this, unless I would also refer the action brought by me against him for a libel on my character . . . conditions obviously inadmissible.

He did not mention that Landor had made an offer of arbitration some six months before his, as appears from the same letter of 30th July:

> To prove my sincere desire of justice, and nothing more, I stated all the circumstances to your friend and patron Mr. Adair, and left him sole arbiter of *all* the differences. I offered to bring affidavits of *all* the facts, & of course he is able to judge of the truth or untruth, the fairness or unfairness of all when they should come before him. If he declined it, perhaps I need not hint the reason.

Betham's statement studiously avoids noting the date of Landor's offer:

> Mr. Landor states a proposal made by him to Mr. Adair . . . to appoint that gentleman judge of our differences. This it would be difficult to reconcile with the refusal which my offers to refer have met with. But when it is considered that Mr. L. was not known to Mr. Adair, and that it was made without purporting to be with my concurrence, I think little doubt will be felt that he expected

Mr. Adair would decline it, and that it was hazarded for the purpose of giving to his proceedings an appearance of candour which did not really belong to them.

Apart from leaving unexplained why his own friend and patron should have declined the opportunity of arbitration, Betham imputes to Landor a cunning or talent for "sharp practice" ludicrously incompatible with his character. But Betham himself was capable of sharp practice, as in the matter of the timber. He does not explain why, after Landor had offered arbitration before July, he himself waited till the following November to make a similar offer. It seems that he waited till he had instituted proceedings for libel, knowing that Landor would then refuse to submit one case to arbitration without the other, and so achieved the purpose which he impudently imputed to Landor—"of giving to his proceedings an appearance of candour which did not really belong to them."

CHAPTER VI

FIRST YEARS OF EXILE

§ 1

SOUTHEY URGED LANDOR AGAINST selling his life interest in Llanthony and against permanently settling abroad. If, he said, financial trouble necessitated exile for the present, let him go, "not as an emigrant, but as a guest or stranger." Doubtless others of his family argued in the terms of his brother Robert's letter of the previous August. But Landor's mind was made up. Miserably sick at heart from the failure of his plans, he could never bring himself to visit Llanthony again; burning with indignation against his enemies and the laws of justice which upheld them, he raged against England and the English. Above all, his pride was mortally wounded; he could not face the humiliation of being pointed out as one whose foolishness had implicated him in financial embarrassment, of listening to lawyers disentangling with cold condescension his ravelled affairs, of enduring the vulgar familiarity of his creditors. Having made up his mind, he could not bear arguments about it; he wanted to rid his mind and conscience of the subject, and every reminder was a twist of the sword in the wound.

He was in this mood when he was joined by his wife and one of her sisters at Jersey, whither he had sailed from Weymouth. Her state of mind can be imagined. As a girl of seventeen, only three years before, she had seemingly done well for herself by marrying Landor. According to Forster, she was "the daughter of a banker at Banbury, whom ill success had

taken to other employment in Spain, while his family found a home in Bath." Landor, on information doubtless supplied by his mother-in-law, described his father-in-law as a descendant of J. Thuillier de Malaperte, Baron de Nieuveville, first gentleman of the bedchamber to Charles the Eighth. He was known as Jean Pierre Thuillier, and came of a Huguenot family which emigrated to Geneva at the time of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. He was born at Geneva in 1760, and died at Cadiz in 1836. Landor, who does not appear to have met him, related that "he placed his money in a mercantile house at Cadiz; he lost part, but going over there took possession of the whole concern, and left his nine children about £1500 each." His wife was a Miss Burrow of Exeter; from her brother, the Rev. James Burrow, vicar of Bampton, Oxfordshire, Landor borrowed four hundred pounds sometime before leaving England.

At the time of Landor's marriage, Thuillier was presumably recently departed to salvage the wreck of his fortunes at Cadiz, and his wife must have congratulated herself and her daughter, whose dowry was only her good looks, on securing a brilliant match. The girl saw a pleasant future before her, as the wife of a gifted man of fortune, dividing her time between playing the squire's lady in Monmouthshire, and spending part of the season in social pleasure at Bath and London. Her first disappointment came when her bridegroom cut short the honeymoon to hurry to Llanthony, and she found herself in temporary lodgings adjoining the Abbey ruins instead of mistress of a mansion. With her husband alternately shut up with his writing and raging about vexatious business, she can have felt little love for the loneliness and frequent rains of Llanthony, and after she had reigned at last only a few months in the newly built house, she accompanied Landor's flight to Swansea to face the desolation of a small seaside resort during winter months. Now, with dismay and despair, she heard Landor's resolution to live permanently abroad; not only vanished were her dreams of a squire's lady's spacious life, but she saw herself banished forever from Bath, her family and friends.

As soon as she joined him in Jersey, she began appeals and persuasion. In his mood of soreness, Landor could not bear mention of the matter. When she persisted, he felt in self-pity that she neither appreciated his sufferings nor regarded his feelings, and the pathetic spectacle of her twenty-year-old prettiness appealing against being torn from her family and friends, instead of inspiring tenderness, seemed a cruel reproach wantonly added to his cup of bitterness. Tenderness might have won her, but she now conceived him to be callously selfish and unreasonable, and tearful appeals developed into angry recriminations. It was very well, she argued, for him to contemplate equably the prospect of exile; he was nearly forty and had fully enjoyed the pleasures of youth. But she was twenty—half his age—when she should have been on the threshold of a pretty woman's reign of admiration and social success. When she taunted him on the disparity in their ages in her sister's presence, Landor's pride took offence; he rose at four in the morning and sailed in an oyster boat for France.

From Tours on 2nd October, he wrote to Southey a dramatic announcement of his leaving his wife. But, within a few days he heard from his eldest sister-in-law, that his wife was grief-stricken and ill, and immediately he forgot all resentment and wrote her a letter of comfort. On 23rd January 1815, he informed Southey that as soon as his wife's health and the weather would allow her to travel, he was to pay a flying visit of two days to England to fetch her. At the same time he announced the publication of his Latin poems, *Idyllia Nova Quinque Heroun atque Heroidum*, which he dedicated in terms of reverence to Dr. Parr.

It seems that his wife had not yet joined him before Napoleon's escape from Elba in March. The English colony took fright; four thousand, according to Landor, hurriedly applied for passports. Landor, however, characteristically declined to be moved. He remained throughout the Hundred Days, and after Waterloo, when English residents were warned to leave, he wrote to Carnot, a member of the provisional government,

saying that, while he had "no confidence in the moderation or honour of the Emperor," he was nevertheless resolved to stay because he considered the danger to be greater in the midst of a broken army. A week later, when Napoleon occupied Tours, Landor's—"a cheap house for Tours . . . the only sitting room looks into a pretty little garden"—was the only house in the town without a billet, a consideration he owed to Carnot's courtesy. It was always his firm belief that, one day seeing a horseman dismount in the courtyard of the prefect's house, he recognised the traveller as the fugitive Napoleon.

Always ready to fight on the weaker side, if Landor ever felt kindly towards Napoleon, it was in the hour of his fall. He had no love for the Bourbons, and after the escape from Elba, told Southey he thought Napoleon's government "not unlikely now to last." In this belief, and with a view to remaining permanently in France, he had written to Carnot. Of two evils, he preferred Napoleon, and watched with contemptuous impatience the Bourbon restoration. He felt contempt, too, for the plaudits of vulgar triumph, and his disgust at Wordsworth's *Thanksgiving Ode on the Battle of Waterloo* was such that, when after twenty years, Wordsworth's disparagement of Southey roused his indignation, he remembered Wordsworth's apostrophe, "Almighty God . . . Yea, Carnage is thy daughter," and wrote scathingly:

> No more on daisies and on pilewort fed
> By tiresome Duddon's ever troubled bed,
> No! Grasmere's cuckoo leaves these tranquil scenes
> For cities, shovel hats, and dandy deans,
> And prickt with spicy cheer and portly nod,
> Devoutly fathers Slaughter upon God.

At the beginning of October, soon after Landor, following nearly a year's separation, had been joined by his wife, his brother Robert visited Tours. He found Landor comfortably established on friendly terms with all about him. Among the

English colony, he started one of the great friendships of his life with Francis Hare, who had visited Tours in April to be at the bedside of his dying father; he was intimate with a brother of Henry Clifford, the barrister consulted over the grand jury affair, and Sir Roderick Murchison, a friend of Hare's, whom he addressed in verse nearly fifty years later in *Heroic Idyls*. Daily he did his own shopping in the market place—Robert reported his saying that "he rather saves than not, but I suspect there must be some mistake in the calculation" —and his brother was impressed by the joyous greetings he received from the market women, whose hearts he had won by his laughing jest and compliments. He was friendly even with the prefect—a rare instance of his amiable relations with authority.

Robert Landor came as a disturbing influence. He brought deeds for Landor's signature—presumably those which resigned the management of his estate to his brothers Charles and Henry as joint trustees,—and was, in fact, the accredited ambassador of the rest of the family. Landor, it appears, had suffered from his reputation. Always an outsider in the family circle, he was reckoned to be difficult and uncertain of temper, impetuous, pig-headed and unreasonable, careless of money; hence even his mother had been persuaded that his enemies were all in the right and Landor uniformly in the wrong. The scrupulous keeping of accounts, strict living within one's income, and prompt payment of debts were part of her religion, and she heard with horror of the vast complications of her son's financial embarrassments. To her strict morality her son's conduct seemed nothing short of dishonour, and with the curious innocence of charity or mercy so characteristic of the narrowly religious mind, she condemned him without hearing his defence. Evidence appears that this attitude of his mother and brothers cost Landor's estate dear, for they accepted unquestioned the impudent claims of the local rascals, who, the defender of the citadel having fled, gathered greedily to share in the spoils.

Robert came like a priest to shrive a convicted sinner, but he quickly found that he had heard only one version of the story. Apparently Landor was believed by his family to have raised the loan at Swansea to finance himself on the continent; Robert was surprised to learn that "of the £3000 paid by the Swansea Bankers, Walter reserved to himself but £200; the rest was sent to the Banker at Abergavenny & to Mr. Gabb, for the payment of different Debts." He heard for the first time of "many large sums paid into Mr. Gabb's hands for particular purposes to which they have never been applied," and, "as for Mr. Gabell, Walter swears that Mr. G. owes him more than a thousand pounds and that he lent him £50 at a time." He began to realise "how wretchedly everything has been managed, both by him and his agents." In a long letter from Tours to his brother Henry, Robert wrote on 4th October:

Walter appears to be very much altered in disposition & I never felt so sorry for him before. This threat of the Swansea Bankers hangs upon his Mind, which might otherwise be cheerful enough. He has made a solemn resolution never to spend more than £450 a year, even after my Mother's death, till every guinea is paid off & his wife joins him in this determination. . . . I am delighted with the conduct of Julia, who appears quite indifferent about her mode of life. She is, however, very much affected by the situation, for Tours is between two rivers on a dead level, which runs sixty miles, & by the dread of public outrage. How much I wish that it was in Mrs. Landor's power to relieve them from this apprehension of arrest, & pay the Swansea Bankers. I know the difficulties & I have made Walter quite sensible of them, but I am fully persuaded that his intentions are now quite honourable, & that nothing would be lost ultimately. When I told him of his Servants & the Tradesmen's debts or rather dues, & represented the state of his property, he seemed quite confounded & overwhelmed, he had heard of them before, but not understood them, his Mind seemed quite bewildered & he only perceived things by piecemeal. Sometimes he is very cheerful, & at others, languid & miserable. Since I came he has not slept half an hour, & today he is quite unwell.

Within a few days of his brother's arrival, Landor decided to leave Tours. His wife, on account of her health, wished to

leave before the winter, and Landor was depressed by a letter brought by Robert from their brother Charles, warning him that if the Swansea bankers discovered his residence, he might be arrested for debt. The cheap rate of living at Tours had enabled him to retain his own carriage, and "after contests with his landlady of a most tremendous description," he set out for Italy, travelling post, himself and his brother in the dickey, his wife and her maid inside the carriage. Travelling to Lyons, they passed through territory occupied by German troops; at Moulins the Prince of Hesse and his staff offensively ogled Landor's wife, luckily while Landor was out of the way.

During the three weeks' journey to Milan, tempers frayed, the brothers fell to antagonism, and Robert became less sympathetically inclined. Evidently the young wife had been badly frightened by Landor's leaving her; possibly her mother had shown no taste for the liability of a daughter living apart from her husband and less sympathy with her desolate state than she had expected. She had returned full of good resolutions to play the submissive wife, and finding him in real danger of arrest, she felt both anxiety for his sake and sympathy with his troubles. Her youthful grace and charm won Robert's admiration, and warmly approving her gentle submission to his brother's moods, he felt resentment on her account against Landor's oddities of temper.

> He is seldom out of a passion or a sulky fit excepting at dinner, when he is more boisterous and good-humoured than ever. Then his wife is a darling, a beauty, an angel and a bird. But for just as little reason the next morning she is a fool. She is certainly gentle, patient, and submissive. She takes all the trouble, is indeed too officious, and would walk on foot most willingly if he wished it, and she were able. If he loses his keys, his purse, or his pocket-handkerchief, which he does ten times in an hour, she is to be blamed; and she takes it all very quietly.

By the time they reached Milan, Robert had lost all patience with his brother:

If he is ever really unhappy, it is because the cook has put oil or garlic into the soup. Give him a good dinner well cooked, and he is happier than an emperor. He writes and reads all the day besides. As for his creditors, he cares no more about them or his own concerns than about Bonaparte's. He has plenty of money for this country; lives as well as ever he did in his life; and at Tours had even saved five-and-thirty pounds. He has one entire quarter in his banker's hands at present, after travelling so far.

In this mood Robert was ripe for rough words, and it appears that he rashly intruded between husband and wife to rebuke his brother for his irritability. There was no regret on either side when he set out for Rome, leaving them at Como.

Regretting Tours, Landor was prepared to find every fault with Italy, and he quickly found trouble. Caroline of Brunswick was then at Como, and there were rumours that the Prince Regent contemplated securing a divorce from her. Landor fell foul of some of her acquaintance, and as his wife and brother, if not Landor himself, were at pains to avoid attention lest he should be tracked down by his creditors, local rumour whispered that he was a secret agent of the Prince. On 1st January 1816 Robert wrote from Rome to Henry Landor:

I have heard from Walter, who has got into hot water about the Princess of Wales; they seem to have taken him for a Spy on her Conduct, which, as all Italy knows & I suppose all the world must know, is infamous & profligate to such a degree that the Prince can find no difficulty whatever in getting a Divorce.

Relating (as Landor himself later told Southey) how Lady Cumming, daughter of a former lady-in-waiting on the Princess, had been "obliged to leave the house abruptly through the indecencies she had witnessed," and how the Princess could now obtain no reputable English ladies to attend her, Robert finally exclaimed, "But yet what had Walter to do with all this? He has a most surprising alacrity in getting into Scrapes."

Robert's letters of this time show that he had resigned himself impatiently to regard his eldest brother as an incorrigible

and irresponsible eccentric, a view in which he persisted for the rest of his life and impressed upon Forster. "Walter has been imploying Slatter & Munday to print Latin Poetry," he told his brother Henry, "which no one ever reads or even hears of—perhaps the books will not pay the expenses of publication —there is nothing left you but patience and, if possible, indifference." And talking of the danger of arrest—"it is impossible to conceal Walter's place of residence," he said, "as he has proclaimed it everywhere." He recognised so little of his brother's character that he failed to appreciate how Landor, indignant at the imputation of being a spy on a woman's misconduct, would sacrifice all considerations of personal safety to disprove the libel. It was, in fact, soon generally known that he had done something which compelled his residence out of England, and a dozen years later popular rumour in Florence credited him with enforced exile for "some offence against police regulations" and for having "threatened to pull the judge by his throat down from his judgment seat."

On his way home from his tour of Italy, Robert Landor called at Como in June 1816. He found Landor and his wife installed in a "comfortable house"; he "observed all due caution about the state of his Spouse," but remarked:

> Julia looks thin, but not pale; talks much of dying, and of returning to Bath, preferring the latter a little. . . . Walter is much as usual; that is, in very unequal spirits; fretful, gloomy, absent, and very gay by turns. Unfortunately the latter is not frequent, and I believe that I saw him to the greatest advantage.

Contrary to his belief, he probably saw his brother to the worst advantage, for the presence of Robert would serve, as it did at Tours, to remind Landor of his financial troubles and the nightmare of Llanthony.

Landor now cultivated the habit of detachment which he pursued throughout the rest of his life. His closest rival as a writer of magnificent English prose, De Quincey, formulated in his youth a list of the "constituents of happiness" necessary

to the life of a man devoted to intellectual pursuits. De Quincey lacked the tenacity to acquire them; Landor lacked the self-insight to recognise their necessity, but he acquired them all by instinct or accident. Briefly, De Quincey's list was: 1. A capacity of thinking—of abstraction and reverie. 2. Interest in human life and nature. 3. Fixed, and not merely temporary, residence in some spot of eminent beauty. 4. Interchange of solitude and interesting society. 5. Books. 6. Some great intellectual project. 7. Health and vigour. 8. A sense of moral elevation and purity. 9. A vast predominance of content. 10. Emancipation from worldly cares, anxieties, and connections, and from all that is comprehended under the term business, so that time, thoughts, and feelings may be unfettered by petty considerations. 11. The education of a child. 12. A personal appearance tolerably respectable, which, if lacking, may be compensated by dignity of demeanour bespeaking a mind at peace with itself, or by acquiring a high literary name.

The extent to which Landor had the good fortune to acquire all twelve constituents would have moved De Quincey to admiration and envy. The first he cultivated as a young man walking the lonely beach of Swansea, and developed it so that, in later years, he would sit for hours lost in thought—and violently resent interruption by those who conceived him to be doing nothing. Of the second, he delighted more in the study of animal life, flowers, and plants, than in the intricate study of human personality in the flesh; "I love to enter into the thoughts of animals," he told Southey, "and contract a friendship with them whenever they come in my way." The third he had always sought—Swansea, Clifton, Llanthony, Como, and soon the loveliness of Fiesole. Of the fourth, he had long realised the need for solitude, which had been the primary appeal of Llanthony, and as he now cultivated solitude, he was soon to find the benefit of exchanging it only for the company of chosen friends. Fifthly, he never collected books after the sale of his library at Llanthony, but he always obtained what he wanted, read them, stored their pith in his exceptional mem-

ory, and then gave them away. Sixthly, his great intellectual project, as he confided to Southey, was the writing of a history of his own times, which would not confound him "with the Coxes and Foxes of the age." Seventhly, he possessed remarkable health and physical strength. Eighthly, he was incapable of the mean and petty, he had no inclination to vice, and habitually levelled his plane of thought above the heads of the majority.

Of the remaining four, he was soon to delight in the eleventh. The twelfth De Quincey, a man of little appearance and timid demeanour, might have esteemed him to possess. But what De Quincey meant by this constituent was a comforting sense of self-satisfaction, a sufficient consciousness of well-being to warrant a feeling of confidence and serenity. This Landor had lacked through the first forty years of his life. Since his boyhood at Rugby, none but a few friends like Parr and Southey had offered the encouragement of praise, and he had worn a mask of assertive defiance to hide a conscience troubled by consciousness of inadequate achievement. He was a man who needed prestige for full play of his finest qualities; more men are spoiled than improved by success, but when fame came to Landor he wore it fittingly, because he had received his due and found peace with his conscience. But for some years before he gained fame, he was acquiring the serenity of self-possession. Since his Rugby boyhood his self-esteem had suffered from his family's view that he had too good an opinion of himself, and it sustained a crushing blow by the humiliation of his failure at Llanthony. In Italy, for the first time, his self-esteem was flattered by a sense of superiority. The impoverished Italian nobility cynically paraded their poverty, with a philosophy quite foreign to the stiff upper lip of the old-school-tie Englishman. Robert Landor related how an Italian nobleman called him "Milord, and accepts a Crown for the Compliment," and having intimated "that a pair of old Shoes or an old Shirt would contribute to his comforts, he kisses hands, he bows to the earth and retires." Robert exclaimed contemptuously that

"these are the descendants of Romulus & Remus," but his brother found such servility from men of birth and culture a gratifying change from the sullen boorishness of the Welsh peasantry, who reluctantly touched their forelocks even to a lady. Landor's was a soul to be heartened by homage, and thirty years later, noting how many sycophants and flatterers visited Landor at Bath, young Augustus Hare shrewdly remarked how, "though he despised the persons, he did not always dislike the flattery." Nor did he neglect to learn a lesson from these ruined aristocrats. The extravagant courtesy, which Robert despised as servile, Landor recognised as a mark of caste of which all their misfortune could not rob them; it is significant that from this time all who met him remarked the courtliness of manner for which he was universally admired in old age.

As he thus assimilated the twelfth of De Quincey's constituents, he advanced towards possession of the ninth, and was helped by acquiring the tenth. The humiliation of his Llanthony failure oppressed him so that he could not bear his wife's mention of it at Jersey, and he kept to himself the misery of the months he spent alone at Tours. Curiously lacking alike in perspicuity and sympathy, Robert recognised only irony and a further example of eccentricity on finding that, "when we supposed him to be so miserable at Tours after parting with his wife, he was busy about a long Latin poem on the Death of Ulysses!" In fact, Landor found refuge from his lonely brooding in the obvious distraction of work. He forgot Llanthony and his financial troubles in living with the ancients and the labour of composition, and following this habit in his first years in Italy, when he no longer had reason to dread as a reminder of anxieties every recall from his books, he came to resent as an intrusion any consideration of worldly business.

After he had signed the necessary documents, he had no further concern in the management of his estate. By the annuity reserved to her by the act of Parliament allowing the sale of Tachbrook to purchase Llanthony, his mother was his chief

creditor, she appointed his brothers Charles and Henry trustees of the estate, and paid him an annual allowance of five hundred pounds, on condition that he repaid to her younger children all the money so advanced on his inheriting Ipsley at her death. Aggrieved at the severity of this arrangement, Landor wrote rarely and reservedly to his mother in the first years of his exile. His effects at Llanthony were sold, and some handsome bargains secured at the remote country auction—Henry Landor bought for ten pounds a Titian valued at twelve hundred guineas. The house was not let, though it was occupied by somebody six months after Landor left England, for the manuscript diary of Captain Thomas Morgan, of the Monmouth and Brecon Militia, records on 28th October 1814, "Went to Llanthony coursing, kill'd 2 hares, had 5 courses dined at Mr. Landor's new home." Some seventeen years later the house was pulled down, either to reduce expense or because it was an object for plunder by the peasantry.

After the birth of a son and heir to Landor in 1818, his mother relented so far that, on his undertaking not to fell any timber at Ipsley during his lifetime without his brother Henry's consent, she resigned to him all arrears of the Llanthony rent charge of £450 a year due to her. Thenceforward, throughout the ten years preceding her death in 1829, she enjoyed with him a regular and affectionate correspondence, and in 1825, having arranged her affairs so that her younger children lost nothing by the concession, she secured their consent to an agreement that Landor should not be required to repay, at her death, the sum of her annual allowances to him.

§ 2

Landor lived nearly three years at Como—from the end of November 1815 to September 1818. During these years he published nothing, because he wrote nothing but occasional verse in English or Latin, and had no money to pay for their

publication. He read vastly, mainly with a view to his monumental history, but he also kept in close touch with current literature, Southey sending him all the latest English publications in return for rare editions of the classics or French and Italian writers. He had great enthusiasm for contemporary poetry, for he always lacked the slightest jealousy of fellow writers, though his taste and judgment were characteristically unconventional, as appears from a letter to Walter Birch in 1818:

> Do not let us be so unjust to our own age as to compare any other with it in genuine poetry. If the whole of the *Excursion* is equal to this portion of it, I do not hesitate to assert that all the productions of the Augustan age put together fall greatly short of it—Wordsworth, Southey, Miss Bailie, what a class! Even the breakfast-table poets—Campbell, Lord Biron, Scott, Crabbe, Rogers—put all the continent to shame.

In June 1817, during the course of a continental holiday taken after the death of his eldest son, Southey spent three days with him at Como:

> . . . Came
> Southey, a sorrowing guest, who lately lost
> His only boy. We walkt aside the lake,
> And mounted to the level downs above,
> Where if we thought of Skiddaw, named it not.
> I led him to Bellaggio, of earth's gems
> The brightest. *We in England have as bright,*
> Said he, and turn'd his face toward the west.
> I fancied in his eyes there was a tear,
> I knew there was in mine: we both stood still.

They talked much of poetry, especially of Wordsworth, to whom Landor subsequently enclosed one or two books in his parcels to Southey, so opening an occasional correspondence with the recluse of Rydal. Southey was also entertained with the scandalous tales of the Princess of Wales, and on his return home, he warned Landor that, as a likely consequence from the death of the Princess Charlotte, leaving no heir of the younger

generation to the throne, "the amusements of Como may very probably become the amusements of England ere long."

At Como, on 5th March 1818, Landor's eldest son was born. He waited a month before writing to his mother, "knowing the accidents to which such events are liable," especially to women in his wife's "very delicate and feeble state of health." Contrary to expectation, the child "was remarkably strong and healthy, and Julia has not enjoyed such health and spirits for these last five years." This seems remarkable, as "she was bled seventeen times in six months." Landor admitted that such treatment "in England would be considered as imprudent," but otherwise the physician had assured him "she never would have a child born alive," and he reckoned this man's skill to be "totally unexampled in Italy, where to say nothing of ignorance, slovenliness & negligence, particularly among the medical men, are almost universal."

He decided to call the boy Arnold Savage, after a Sir Arnold Savage, a Speaker of the House of Commons whom he believed to have been of his mother's family. He read that this legislator was "the first who declared that grievances should be redressed before money should be granted," and "I have so much respect for a person of this stamp that I should be likely to name a son after him, even if I had no connection with his family or name." His wife's sister Laura was godmother, and General Meyrick one of the godfathers, while Landor added:

> He will be christened again in England, if we should return within the next twelve or fourteen years, but on this subject, I am doubtful, or rather, I am indifferent. I have learned that it is possible to live out of England, and that a person, who hates all society, can do without it here full as well as there.

Six months later, in September 1818, he was compelled to leave Como. Indignant against a Milan writer's attack on England, he replied in Latin verses libelling the local authorities, who ordered him to leave the district by 19th September. Hoping to be summoned to Milan, Landor defiantly overstayed his

time till the 28th, and, as he told Southey, "no attempt was made to assassinate me."

He regretted the loss by leaving Como of his intimacy with an Italian scholar, "the calm philosophical Sironi," and he also cherished his recollections of "the little turreted city" for the visits he received there from Southey and "the learned and modest" Immanuel Bekker, a noted Greek scholar from Berlin. Before arriving in November at Pisa, where he spent the winter, he rented for a few weeks at Albaro, near Genoa, the palace of the Marchese Pallavicini, his recollections of a conversation with whom appeared in his first volume of *Imaginary Conversations.*

He was much impressed by Genoa and Nervi; the latter place possessed "probably the best climate in the world," and he told Walter Birch that, "if the Genoese state was still in the enjoyment of its freedom, I could live and die at Nervi." He believed that no city in the world, except Rome (when rebuilt by Nero) and Corinth, ever equalled the magnificence of Genoa. Bath, he thought, came next, "but immense the distance," though "nothing in the world equals the Circus at Bath." Pisa he thought less of:

"Pisa has the advantage of a river, 200 feet wide, running thro' its principal street, but it is infested with English and Irish and moschitos. I pay a guinea a week for my lodgings, without linen and plate, and everything is a third dearer than Genoa, except game. I am anxious to visit Rome to see the Pope and Consalvi and Canova. Curious, and rather a pity, that the only three men in Europe should be within the same walls."

To Southey he wrote six months later, "When my spirits wax faint, I say to myself, I have yet to see Rome and Southey." It was seven years before he saw Rome and by then the sculptor Canova, as well as Pope Pius VII and his secretary of state, Cardinal Consalvi, whom he admired for their defiance of Napoleon and their liberal measures after the Congress of Vienna, were all three dead.

In the spring of 1819, he retired from Pisa to spend the summer in the coolness of the mountains at Pistoia. Throughout the year, he was busy on Latin verses and an essay in Latin prose "concerning the cultivation and use of the Latin language, why modern Latin writers were not more widely read," and arguing the advantages of universally employing Latin for the writing of works of culture and imagination. For a prize offered by the Stockholm Academy, he wrote an ode to Bernadotte on his accession to the Swedish throne, and published at Pistoia a small volume of verse, *Sponsalia Polyxenae*, which was a vanguard of the *Idyllia Heroica Decem*, comprising a collection of his Latin verse with his long prose essay, published at Pisa in the new year of 1820. "Oh that you would write in English," wrote Southey in February 1820; "I can never think of your predilections for Latin verse but as a great loss to English literature." And a few months later, Robert Landor wrote acidly to his brother Henry:

> I have received two or three letters lately from Walter about some Latin poems, which have been printed at Pisa, and sent to Longman for publication. Here is another foolish expense without the chance of sixpence in return! Who reads Latin poems written in these days!

Unabashed by these reproaches, Landor continued his Latin labours, until Wordsworth succeeded in one letter where the arguments of Southey and Robert Landor had failed consistently for years. Landor wrote a second Latin essay, supplementary to the first, discussing aspects of poetry and criticism treated in Wordsworth's prefaces, and declaring in his own preface that he had taken whatever he wanted from Wordsworth's work, "with the same liberty as a son eats and drinks in his father's house." He then sent the manuscript to Wordsworth, along with a volume of his Latin poems. Apologising for delaying his reply, due to trouble with his eyes, Wordsworth assured him that "it could not but be grateful to me to be praised by a poet who has written verses of which I would

rather have been the author than of any produced in our time." But he could not agree with Landor's plea in favour of the use of Latin, and his own "frequent infirmity of sight" gave him an especial right to urge his argument, for "had your Idylliums been in English I should long ere this have been as well acquainted with them as with your *Gebir* and with your other poems; and now I know not how long they may remain to me a sealed book." This must have shaken Landor; if Wordsworth, after the bribe of having his praises sung in a preface, could not bring himself to read his verses, they could indeed hope for few readers. So the second Latin essay did not appear; nor did Landor publish any more Latin verse until his *Poemata* of 1847.

§ 3

From Pistoia Landor returned to Pisa in the autumn of 1819. He had intended to go to Florence, but firstly, the Austrian Emperor was there on a visit, and "these people produce no other effect by their visits than degradation and dearness"; secondly, he was disappointed in negotiations for a house there. From Pisa, on 6th March 1820, he wrote to his mother:

> I am happy to inform you that Julia was safely delivered of a girl, about nineteen minutes after seven this morning. She suffered very little, and has been laughing and talking with the nurses ever since. . . . It is the custom here to carry the children to be baptised the very day of their birth. I shall not pay any attention to such foolery.

Doubtless in order that his wife should remain near her doctor, he stayed at Pisa throughout the following summer.

In the autumn he heard that his amusements of Como, as Southey had prophesied, were become the amusements of England, Caroline being used by the Whigs as an instrument of attack on the government and George IV. At Como in 1817 one of his English neighbours had been Sir Charles Wolseley,

whose first wife was a sister of Landor's friend, Clifford. As a radical reformer, Wolseley had much in common with Landor, and he also shared his tendencies to quixotry and paradox. These qualities quickly landed him into trouble on his return to England, for he became a leader at Birmingham of the agitations culminating in the Peterloo riots, and was imprisoned in 1819 for sedition. When Queen Caroline's trial split the English public into two camps, he snatched at a vague chance of escape from his imprisonment by writing to the *Times* that, if released, he would "undertake to be of the utmost service to her Majesty in the pending prosecution against her, by going from hence to Como, where, during the year 1817, I lived several months with my family; and from that circumstance, and being acquainted with several people who were employed by the queen, I have an opportunity of getting at evidence that would be of the greatest consequence, that no Englishman but myself and a Mr. Walter Landon, who is now in Italy, can have had the same opportunity of knowing."

"Sir Ch. W. must be half crazy," wrote Southey to Landor; "we may judge how capable he is of forming a sane opinion upon any subject when he has so topsy-turvy a recollection of your knowledge upon this." Landor had, indeed, no first-hand knowledge of the Queen's conduct, for she had left Como in the month of his arrival. But the suggestion of his being a spy upon her had so annoyed him that he listened readily to gossip about her and her friends. To Southey he had reported, as Robert Landor had written to their brother Henry, the indecencies committed by Caroline and her Italian chamberlain, Pergami, in the presence of Lady Cumming. On the occasion of Caroline's later visit to Como, he gleaned further gossip, which he confided to Walter Birch in a letter from Pisa on 27th November 1818.

You have probably heard of the misfortune that has befallen the Princess of Wales. The physician who attended her at Pisa, and who left her—with anger on both sides—because his return to Milan was indispensable, told Cavalier Morosini, who informed

my friend Sr Sironi, that he was called in too late to perform a speedy cure, that the P. and five of her stallions had the syphilis, the men probably knew what was the matter, but the P. gave it out everywhere that she was poisoned by the English, hinting that her husband was the author of the attempt, and hiring a rascally advocate to write a book, in which he declares literally that the Prince had tried to do the same thing in another manner, both at Como & at Genoa. It was reported at the former place that she actually was dead, poisoned by the English. . . .

Such evidence as Landor could have given, therefore, was the reverse of favourable to Caroline, and while he lamented to Southey that "Parr should take so active a part in favour of that woman," he felt intense disgust with the scavenging of the informers:

> Never did I entertain a doubt of her guilt and infamy; but those wretches are more guilty and more infamous who employ false keys in bedrooms and escritoires . . . Had Brougham's brother entered my house, the interview would have been short, and both standing. I admire the impudence of Wolseley. He attempted to defend the doings of the princess; but never hinted a thought of her innocence when I constantly represented her what all Italy knows her to be, not indeed with legal proofs (such are almost impossible in similar cases), but according to all appearances year after year. Yet if a court of justice called on me to give evidence, I should give my evidence according to the orders and spirit of our laws, and say that, not knowing her guilty, I am not authorised to prejudice her: proofs alone constitute guilt.

In the tone of these words to Southey, he wrote publicly to the *Times;* he declined to give information of the secrets of bedchambers or writing desks, and desired that "in future a Mr. Walter Landon might not be united with a Sir Ch. Wolseley."

Reading this letter in the *Times* must have rubbed Robert Landor on the raw. For, secure in his Hughenden parsonage, he was busily writing pseudonymous letters to the *Courier,* so violently attacking the Queen and her adherents that a bill of indictment was brought against the newspaper. To his brother

Henry, who generously offered to go to prison in his place if the identity of the letter writer had to be disclosed, Robert wrote on 11th December 1820:

> Elizabeth will tell you of Walter's letter in the Times, if you have not already heard of it. He is the most whimsical creature upon earth, since the times of Puck. His indignation against the government is so great that it has half consumed his former hatred for the Queen, as a fire is supposed to burn out a scald. But, however, his letter is just what one could have wished in one respect, it is too magnificent to be intemperate.

Yet again he interpreted only eccentricity, and knew his brother too little to realise his motives.

Landor viewed England's troubles with detachment. On his forty-fifth birthday he told Southey that he thought of England as if he were in another world, without personal interest. He became cosmopolitan, and acquired the ability to feel enthusiasm for a cause on its own intrinsic merits, without the vitiating bias of patriotism. For this reason, his writings abound with statements of true philosophy and scientific politics which retain the full vitality of their message, weathering the storms of time as can no merely opportune expedients. In the trial of Queen Caroline, which tore England into two violently partisan camps, he found only food for reflection on the "miserable weakness and indecision" of the aristocracy in the affair. This, and its opposition to the repeal of the slave trade, he counted the two worst stigmas on the English House of Lords in one of the *osservazioni*, or letters, which he published early in 1821. "I have written three orations," he informed Southey on 12th March 1821, "exposing the duplicity of the 'Alleati Santi' (as the Neapolitans call them), the danger to which all constitutional governments are exposed, and the inexpediency, not to say impossibility of forming a house of Lords." He took the same view of the Holy Alliance and its policy towards Italy as was expressed in the English Parliament by Whigs like Mackintosh. "I wish I had some thousand pounds to spare," he said in speaking of the revolution at Naples, "as I had when the

Spaniards rose against Bonaparte, that what I offered to them I might offer to the Neapolitans." He had no money to help them, but he published, as he had published his *Letters to Riquelme*, a twelve page pamphlet called *Poche Osservazioni . . . di Walter Savage Landor, gentiluomo inglese, signore di Lantony*, stating his sympathy with the oppressed people. He sent an English translation of the pamphlet to Longman, but, as he later told Southey, that publisher had "not thought it worth his while to give me any information about the little work I sent to be printed."

On 22nd April 1821, he wrote to his mother from Florence, where he had gone to look for a house. "Julia," he said, "is thin and weak, but is without any particular complaint, and is recommended to change the air for the summer, as Pisa lies low, and is abandoned by all the inhabitants in the warm season." His mother had been ill, and writing to inform him of the arrangement she had made to relieve him of the arrears of the Llanthony rent charge, hoped "in time you will come and spend the remainder of your life in this country where you have many well-wishers, which some time or other you will be convinced of." Replying, after expressing concern for her health, he continued:

> The misery of not being able to see you, is by far the greatest I have ever suffered. Never shall I forget the thousand acts of kindness and affection I have received from you, from my earliest to my latest days.
>
> I have deferred the christening of my little daughter, because I wished to have one to be named after you, and to whom I might request you to be godmother. As perhaps I may never have another, I shall call my little Julia by the name of Julia Elizabeth Savage Landor, and, with your permission, will engage some one of Julia's English friends to represent you. This is the first time I was ever a whole day without seeing Arnold. I wonder what his thoughts are upon the occasion. Mine are a good deal more about him than about the house I must look for.
>
> He is of all living creatures the most engaging, and already repeats ten of the most beautiful pieces of Italian poetry. The honest

priest, his master, says he is a miracle and a marvel, and exceeds in abilities all he ever saw or heard of. He turns into ridicule every person that speaks bad Italian. What a pity it is that such divine creatures should ever be men, and subject to regrets and sorrows.

This last reflection has peculiar pathos in the light of later events; Landor could not foresee the tragic destiny of his passionate love for his children, though, with that wise philosophy which contrasted so oddly with his hapless mismanagement of his own life, he was always aware, even in moments of most doting fondness, that he could not expect his unalloyed delight in his children to last beyond their childhood. Telling his sister Ellen four years later how he wished never "to be a day without any of them, while they are children," he added, as if with foreboding, "they are different creatures when they grow up."

§ 4

Landor's arrival at Florence in the early summer of 1821 was attended by strained relations with the British minister's entourage. The minister's secretary, "one Dawkins, the most consummate scoundrel in Italy, was so insolent that I requested him to mention any place in England or France where we might become better acquainted in a few minutes." The minister, Lord Burghersh, did his best to placate matters, but on finding that Dawkins was not materially punished, Landor informed the minister "that he had neglected his duty and forgotten his promise, which was to see an injury done me redressed." Indignantly he wrote to Birch:

The only Englishman in Italy who does any credit to his country is the only one who receives from its ministers and their dependents and visitors every mark of insolence and injustice. I have collected anecdotes of those who have been employed by our government on the Continent, and will publish them at some future time.

Anecdotes of the unfortunate Dawkins duly appeared as notes to the "Peter Leopold and President Du Paty" dialogue in the first edition of *Imaginary Conversations*, and the second edition included a further amusing story of the "Sieur Dorcas," which was repeated in the later dialogue between "Florentine, English Visitor, and Landor," as the exploit of the "Sieur Dorkins." Landor's spleen lasted for years after Dawkins had been promoted to become minister at Athens, and he told Lady Blessington that, while "this ragamuffin" had given abundant proofs of his "negligence and stupidity," he was, he heard, much improved, for "if he has not clean hands, he has clean gloves."

Landor's first home at Florence was the palace of the Medicis; telling Birch that he had taken it for three years and a half, he added with satisfaction that "it is perhaps the best in Italy that is ever let." Of the last representatives of this ancient family, he drew a sad sketch reflecting the state of the Italian aristocracy.

> The old man has two sons, excellent young men, one of whom is married, but has only a daughter. I told the marchesa, his wife, that I hoped she would have a son. She replied that she was contented without one, and the husband said, "It is time that our family should be extinct." The head of a family the most illustrious on earth possesses about £700 a year, which will be divided between his sons according to the laws established by Napoleon.

With his pride in dynasty and the intent tradition of family estates descending from father to son, he would have recoiled from the premonition that, within a century of his death, families of the English aristocracy with no less historic names would be in no better plight.

At Florence, Landor settled to a full enjoyment of that interchange of solitude and interesting society which De Quincey had earlier secured at Grasmere. He had now abandoned financial cares; he was in regular affectionate correspondence with his mother and, thanks to the low cost of living in Italy, his expenses rarely exceeded his annual allowance. In the intervals of

his absorption in study, he received and entertained a few chosen friends. "There are few foreigners of learning who do not come to see me," he said in 1823, though he received less English, owing to friction with the minister. Two years later, he said, "Here in Florence I have two or three friends, a manageable number, and some dozens who call on me, but whom I cannot receive." Only the chosen were admitted to interrupt his solitude.

The dearest of his friends was Francis Hare. Like Landor, who was eleven years his senior, Hare was an eldest son and heir to a large fortune; he likewise possessed brilliant intellectual gifts, and as a boyhood friend of the future Lord Palmerston, discussed with him such subjects as Don Quixote in the original, marriage, and the less conventional classics. After his father's death, he "kept horses and resided much at Melton Mowbray, losing an immense amount of money there." He lost so much that his career as a Regency buck lasted only three years before he was compelled by debts and reduced income to reside on the continent, mostly in Florence and Rome, where he accumulated a pleasant collection of amorous affairs. The acquaintance begun at Tours was renewed at Pisa, and rapidly ripened into affectionate friendship when Landor came to Florence. Each found a match in the other as equally well read, equally extravagant in their opinions, and equally excitable in argument.

"It was a constant struggle of competition and display between them," said their friend Seymour Kirkup; "both often wrong, although men of strong memory. They used to have great disputes, mostly on questions of history. . . . Hare was often astounded at being corrected. He was thought infallible; and I remember our consul-general at Rome calling him a monster of learning."

Hare had an "excited, spluttering manner," and received the nickname of "The Silent Hare," from his extreme loquacity; the society anecdotist, Captain Gronow, described him as "remarkable for his leanness, his appetite, and his conversational powers."

He could not only speak every European language, but all the various *patois* of each tongue, with a rapid and effervescent utterance that reminded one of the rushing of some alpine torrent. . . . His memory was as surprising as his loquacity; he could repeat whole pages from almost any book that was mentioned in his presence, and "come down" with effect on any unlucky wight who had made an incorrect quotation from some rare or obsolete volume.

His impish taste in practical jokes led him to enter a confessional box at Pisa, and there to draw upon his picturesque imagination for such a narrative of crime and vice that the simple priest at length put his fingers in his ears and fled in horror from the building. Such an exploit must have evoked Landor's most stentorian laughter. Hare also shared Landor's independence of spirit; like him, he refused to leave France during the Hundred Days, and actually contrived to attend a levée held by Napoleon at the Tuileries, where Gronow reports the following conversation to have taken place:

"Well, sir," asked Napoleon, "what has kept you in Paris when your countrymen have all left?"

"To see the greatest man in Europe, sir."

"Ah, it is, then, your opinion, having seen and conversed with me, that I am not that wild beast I am represented to be by your ministers and the members of your Houses of Parliament?"

"Oh no, sir," replied Hare, "it cannot be the opinion of the English ministers; but I blush when I call to mind the manner in which your name has been traduced by our garrulous members of both Houses."

Two years younger than Hare, Seymour Kirkup arrived in 1816 in Italy, where he lived, mostly at Florence, till he died, aged ninety-two, in 1880. He was reckoned a gifted painter, but Leigh Hunt aptly said that he was "not poor enough, either in purse or accomplishment, to cultivate his profession as he ought to have done." "A man of a more cordial generosity," added Hunt, "with greater delicacy in showing it, I never met with," and that Kirkup deserved such praise is witnessed by the

firm friendships of his long life—with William Blake and Haydon, Landor and Browning. His intimacy with Landor began in 1824; forty years later he was among the last faithful friends to visit him.

Through Browning, Kirkup supplied Forster with fifty letters written to him by Landor, which Forster never returned to him, as well as some notes of his personal recollections. From these it appears that Kirkup met Landor through Charles Armitage Brown, whom he described as "the most intimate and confidential friend of Landor for many years." Remembered as the friend of Keats and the editor of Trelawny's *Adventures of a Younger Son*, Brown is an interesting figure of intriguing mystery. The same age as Francis Hare, being born the son of a Scottish stockbroker in 1786, he went to Russia when little more than a boy to act as agent to his elder brother's business. He returned to England in 1810, when the business failed, and for some time struggled on the verge of destitution until another of his brothers came to his rescue. From this brother he derived a sufficient income to live comfortably and pursue a taste for letters. He wrote the libretto of an opera, which was successfully produced at Drury Lane, and when Keats met him in 1817, he was sharing a house at Hampstead with Charles Wentworth Dilke. Sometime after Keats's death, he went to Italy, and was living in or about Florence when Landor came there.

Keats's mock Spenserian stanzas on Brown as "a melancholy carle, thin in the waist, with bushy head of hair," were a playful skit on all that he was not. He was bald, bespectacled and stout, with all the proverbial heart and humour of the fat man who loved his food, wine, and wenches. On Keats his warm geniality and sensual gusto served as a tonic, and the sturdy loyalty of his friendship with Keats he gave freely to Landor for nearly twenty years. Confessing that he had fallen into a habit of "looking towards you as a help in all difficulties," Keats once told him that he was "living for others more than any man I know." He loved the conviviality and the company of his

friends too well to concentrate on any substantial work; he sketched a little, wrote a little, spent years collecting materials for a biography of Keats and for his book on *Shakespeare's Autobiographical Poems,* which, on its publication in 1838, he dedicated to Landor as the best lover of Shakespeare and the best living writer of English. Generously he sacrificed his own interests for the sake of others; having got an Irish servant girl into trouble, he married her, and so devoted himself to his son by her, that he sacrificed a peaceful old age to seek in New Zealand better prospects for him. He had an implacable spirit and outspoken honesty which appealed to Landor. Having quarrelled with Dilke on Keats's financial affairs, he felt such resentment after twenty years that he instructed his son, "If he should accidentally meet with you and civilly accost you, spit in his face." And when his son fell in love, he bluntly stated his disapproval of the girl—"She is sadly deficient in common sense; I never met with a more affected fool—ugly to boot."

Brown had been intimate with Leigh Hunt at Hampstead, and when, in the summer of 1823, Hunt and his wife came to live at Maiano near Florence, Brown soon introduced him to Landor. At Maiano, the scene of Boccaccio's *Decameron,* Brown was then living, "with all the joviality of a comfortable natural piety," in a convent.

> The closet in his study, where it is probable the church treasures had been kept, was filled with the humanities of modern literature, not the less Christian for being a little sceptical; and we had a zest in fancying that we discoursed of love and wine in the apartments of the Lady Abbess.

Francis Hare doubtless shared the zest more than Landor, for while he had no patience with "any kind of romish idolatry or superstition," his sense of chivalry would have blushed for ribaldry in even the imagined presence of a lady. It is unlikely that Brown invited him, as he invited Hunt, on such occasions as the visit of the beautiful Mrs. W., and more often at the Palazzo Medici than at Brown's convent Hunt must have heard

that boisterous laughter resounding "in peals, and climbing; he seemed to fetch every fresh one from a higher story." Hunt was as impressed with the depths of Landor's scholarship, which enabled him to "fancy and feel with, as well as read, Ovid and Catullus," as with his odd contrasts of manner and temper. In his conversation, as in his writings, "after indulging the partialities of his friendships and enmities, and trampling on kings and ministers, he shall cool himself, like a Spartan worshipping a moonbeam, in the patient meekness of Lady Jane Grey." Remarking that he had never known one of such a vehement nature with so great delicacy of imagination, Hunt likened him to a "stormy mountain-pine that should produce lilies."

At their first meeting Hunt showed Landor a hair from Lucrezia Borgia's head given to him by Byron, and published in 1825 the quatrain written on the occasion by Landor:

> Borgia, thou once wert almost too august,
> And high for adoration;—now thou'rt dust!
> All that remains of thee these plaits infold—
> Calm hair, meand'ring with pellucid gold!

Wordsworth's damping letter had turned him from Latin composition to a renewed interest in English verse, and his friendship with Hunt and Brown encouraged this development by bringing him acquaintance with the work of Shelley, Keats and Byron. Shelley he had seen at Pisa, and seems to have had a nodding acquaintance with him from the lines in *Last Fruit:*

> Shelley! whose song so sweet was sweetest here,
> We knew each other little. . . .

Having heard shocking rumours imputing blame to Shelley for his first wife's suicide, he had not sought his further acquaintance. He had frankly declined to meet Byron, not only because he resented Byron's derision of Wordsworth and Southey, but because he regarded him as a satanic publicist of evil and profligacy. "I had avoided him," he said; "I had slighted him; he

knew it: he did not love me; he could not." Byron rarely ignored an offence, and when he was told that Landor had said he would not, or could not, read his works, he made a note for reprisals. When writing his *Vision of Judgment* in retort to Southey's poem of the same name, he added a note to the preface:

"Mr. Southey laudeth grievously 'one Mr. Landor,' who cultivates much private renown in the shape of Latin verses; and not long ago the poet laureate dedicated to him, it appeareth, one of his fugitive lyrics, upon the strength of a poem called *Gebir*. Who could suppose, that in this same Gebir the aforesaid Savage Landor (for such is his grim cognomen) putteth into the infernal regions no less a person than the hero of his friend Mr. Southey's heaven,—yea, even George the Third!"

After quoting the passage where Gebir, viewing the royal shades in the infernal regions, asks, "Aroar, what wretch that nearest us?" Byron concluded, "I omit noticing some edifying Ithyphallics of Savagius. . . . but certainly these teachers of 'great moral lessons' are apt to be found in strange company." He returned to the attack in the eleventh canto of *Don Juan*, written at Pisa early in 1823, when discussing the "eighty 'greatest living poets' ";

> Some persons think that Coleridge hath the sway;
> And Wordsworth has supporters, two or three;
> And that deep-mouth'd Boeotian "Savage Landor"
> Has taken for a swan rogue Southey's gander.

"Deep-mouth'd" indicates that Byron had freely discussed Landor with mutual acquaintances, like Leigh Hunt, the Marquis Pallavicini, and Gould Francis Leckie, a student of diplomatic history, who became a close friend of Landor's at Florence. Landor replied by satirising him, in the dialogue between Bishop Burnet and Hardcastle, as the wicked Lord Rochester's bastard, Mr. George Nelly—"whenever he wrote a bad poem, he supported his sinking fame by some signal act of profligacy, an elegy by a seduction, a heroic by an adultery, a

tragedy by a divorce." The print was hardly dry before he heard of Byron's death in the cause of Greece's liberty, and his remorse found expression in a generous footnote to his second edition, explaining, at the risk of being charged with inconsistency, that if, before the dialogue was printed, Byron had rendered his services to Greece, he would not have written a syllable against him.

In his first year at Florence, Landor tried to recapture the habit of occasional verse for the first time since he had lost the lyrical inspiration of Ianthe. Most of his new efforts he incorporated in the *Imaginary Conversations*. But the muse did not readily respond, and in his efforts to revive the vein, he revised and re-touched much of his early verse, the results eventually appearing in his volume of 1831. He was not in the lyrical mood. He had now acquired the circumstances he most desired —freedom from distraction and personal worries, long hours of uninterrupted solitude for study, the conversation of chosen friends and the company of his children for recreation, serenity of mind and outlook. He needed a medium of expression for his storehouse of learning, a medium for the thoughts, ideas and arguments teeming from his mind. The confines of the novel, the epic, and the drama were too limited; he needed something which would allow him to leap the centuries as he did in conversation.

Southey supplied the key when he told Landor of his idea, conceived early in 1821, of writing dialogues after the manner of Hurd and Lyttelton. Southey's idea culminated in his *Colloquies on Society* some eight years later; he was meantime occupied with his monumental *History of the Peninsular War* and other pressing work. The idea was not new to Landor, for he told Southey that he had written two dialogues, one between Grenville and Burke, the other between Henry IV and Arnold Savage, twenty years before, the former having been offered through Robert Adair to the *Morning Chronicle*, but refused as being too personal. Probably he now began with Southey's idea of one speaker being a mere foil to himself, as in "The Abbé

Delille and Landor," but he soon saw the greater possibilities of using the dramatist's art to endow each speaker with character. By means of his intimate knowledge of the lives and works of his characters–his ability, in Hunt's phrase, to "fancy and feel with" them–he was able to recreate their personalities with the biographer's art. He thus combined the functions of the dramatist and the biographer to reincarnate the owners of the great minds with which he held communion in his study.

But they live before the reader only in isolated scenes. The background of the stage is no more than the black curtain of Shakespeare's theatre. Before the curtain appear the actors, but they wear no costume to indicate even the period in which they lived. For this reason the *Imaginary Conversations* must remain the reading only of the cultivated intellectual. Landor projects his people as they appear to himself, and provides no introductions. His familiar knowledge of his subjects enabled his mind's eye to see every attitude and gesture of his speakers, and the reader's powers of imagination are always straining to achieve similar vision. The degree of such achievement depends upon the quality and quantity of knowledge. Landor is no meal for the superficial education of self-help manuals; he is a feast only for the seasoned epicure.

CHAPTER VII

FLORENCE AND FAME

§ 1

IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED that Landor began writing *Imaginary Conversations* as early as January 1820, as a letter of that month to Walter Birch contained several phrases of classical criticism afterwards used in the "Delille and Landor" dialogue. But he habitually preserved all his writings, often refashioning and developing notes and scraps of verse, which had lain in a drawer for years. Evidently he began to work on the *Imaginary Conversations* soon after coming to Florence in 1821, for the first hint of his occupation appeared in a letter to Southey of 9th March 1822, when he had written fifteen dialogues, two of which he destroyed—one, between Swift and Sir William Temple, because it was "democratical," the other, between Addison and Somers, because it was "composed maliciously, and contained all the inelegancies and inaccuracies of style I could collect from Addison."

Within a few weeks he dispatched the manuscript to Longmans by a Captain Vyner, of the Guards. It should have arrived by 18th April, and when he had heard nothing by 3rd June, he worked himself into a passion of vexation. Directing Southey to retrieve the manuscript from Longman and offer it to another publisher named Mawman, whom he had once visited with Parr, he wrote:

This disappointment has brought back my old bilious complaint together with the sad reflection on that fatality which has

followed me through life, of doing everything in vain. I have however had the resolution to tear in pieces all my sketches and projects, and to forswear all future undertakings. I try to sleep away my time, and pass two-thirds of the twenty-four hours in bed. I may speak of myself as a dead man. I will say, then, that these *Conversations* contained as forcible writing as exists on earth. They perhaps may come out after my decease, and the bookseller will enrich some friend of his by attributing them to him. . . . If they are not really lost, or set aside for this purpose, I may yet have the satisfaction of reading them here at Florence and perhaps they may procure me some slight portion of respect.

His work finished, he knew it was the best he had yet done; he had talked of it exultantly to his friends, and he was now impatient to see it in print and hear his friends' verdicts—so impatient that he had already written to order four copies of the book to be sent out to him. Waiting eagerly from day to day, disappointment darkened into depression; his old morbid feeling of failure asserted itself; he wondered if he was now to disappoint Hare and Brown and Southey, as, years before, he had disappointed Rough and Parr. He had, too, asked Wordsworth's permission to dedicate the book to him; how could he ever write to Wordsworth again if Longman ignored this manuscript as he had ignored the Latin poems and the translated *Osservazioni?* When he wrote thus to Southey, it was in a moment of desperation and despair, when the sense of burdening misfortune induced an agony of self-pity—in such a mood, harassed by troubles at Llanthony, he had scrawled that blotchy note to Robert in May 1813, "Tomorrow I go to prison. . . ."

The results of his despair were doubtless as exaggerated as his feelings. Two thirds of one day, perhaps, he spent in dozing off his liver bile. One sheet of paper he tore up, knowing that—in consequence of his liver—the work was below standard. Almost at once he was busily preparing another copy, though, as he informed Southey on 21st June, he had hoped that the original script would yet safely arrive in London. Apparently the guardsman had dawdled, for Longmans actually received the

manuscript in August, by which time another copy had been entrusted, on Francis Hare's recommendation, to his brother Julius, with instructions to offer it to Mawman. Immediately Landor's eager impatience revived; "if Mawman begins to print on the 5th of October (he will receive the M.S. on the 1st), they will be finished by the end of the month," he wrote to Southey. So little he knew of the mysteries of publishing that he allowed four days for reading the manuscript and about three weeks for printing, binding, and preparations for publication. Nor did he anticipate what actually happened—Mawman declined the manuscript.

He was too busy to indulge in another passion of despair. His liver was in order, and he was under full sail in composition. From the "scraps and projects" destroyed in vexation, there had survived "a couple of sheets (I think)" of a dialogue between Southey and Porson, as well as "an old letter" with some remarks on Wordsworth's poetry: these together formed the nucleus of perhaps the most quoted and celebrated *Conversation.* By the spring of 1823 the number of dialogues had swelled to thirty-three—enough for two volumes instead of one. He was so absorbed in his work that, as he told Southey in March, "it is not improbable that I forgot to tell you I had another son born about five months ago"; even the news that three publishers, Martin, Valpy, and Ridgway, had successively followed Mawman in declining the manuscript, failed to disturb his concentration. Informing Southey that he would undertake "half the loss, provided that only three hundred and fifty copies were printed in octavo," he expressed truculent spleen only in remarking, "It will vex me if I am at last obliged to employ a printer who publishes only pamphlets for the mob, conscious as I am that in two thousand years there have not been five volumes of prose equal in their contents to this." His temper was controlled by the example of generous patience set by Julius Hare.

I have wearied my excellent friend Mr. Hare to death with perpetual corrections and insertions. He never even saw me. He does

not complain of his trouble, occupied as he is in other literary labours: but reproves my attacks on Catholicism, to which he appears more than moderately inclined.

He had given Julius Hare a letter of introduction to Southey, who had then joined forces in seeking a publisher for the book. About this time Hare himself became a contributor to the *London Magazine*, and he decided to ask John Taylor of Taylor and Hessey, proprietors of the magazine, to publish the *Conversations* under the usual profit-sharing agreement.

On 4th March 1823, Taylor replied:

I shall be glad to see Mr. Landor's Ms. and to publish it on the Terms you propose, if it answers the Expectations I am led to form of it, both from your Description and from the acknowledged Ability of the Author. I have often heard my Friend Mr. De Quincey speak of him in such Terms for his extraordinary Powers of Mind, as surpass even the Estimation in which he is generally held.

Taylor "found some Difficulty in reading Mr. Landor's writing," it was not till 16th April that he declared "it would suit us to publish it, if certain Passages or the Conversations in which they occur were omitted." Fearing an explosion from Landor at a bookseller's presuming to tamper with his work, Hare promptly put forward Landor's offer to bear any financial loss sustained. But Taylor was one of those publishers who believe themselves literary-minded, and he valued his own literary pretensions with the unbending solemnity of a self-educated man.

"If I worked only as a Man of Business on the speculation of publishing Mr. Landor's Work, I could not hesitate after his liberal Proposal to bear the Loss; but that has not been in my thoughts. . . . I am averse to become instrumental to the appearance of such of these conversations, or such Parts of them, as I cannot honestly approve. . . . I must therefore decline the Publication."

Hare hastened to ask Taylor to cite the objectionable passages, and persuaded him to agree that the proofs should be submitted

to Wordsworth and Southey, Taylor promising that "if they approve what I condemn, I will consent to forego the Right of private Judgment, and be bound by their Decision." Cunningly Hare then insured Wordsworth's co-operation by giving Taylor the dialogue between Southey and Porson, flattering Wordsworth's poetry, for publication in the July number of the *London Magazine*. He also wrote warningly to Landor, assuring him that Taylor was "the most honourable man in the trade; and after no small difficulties, arising however altogether from conscientious scruples and in no degree from considerations of profit, we came to an agreement; or I ought rather to say, I was so weary of soliciting publisher after publisher . . . that I forced Taylor to undertake it."

Southey also wrote on 8th May, endorsing Hare's estimate of Taylor, and assuring Landor that, Wordsworth being then abroad, he would gladly take the responsibility of arbitration, and act for Landor as Landor would act by him. With characteristic delicacy, but equally characteristic regard of policy, Landor thought to remove Southey's feelings of compunction by suggesting that, wherever he marked an objectionable passage, an author's note should be inserted, purporting to draw the editor's attention to it. Southey, however, chose to take full responsibility as editor, and Landor was prepared for worse than anything either Hare or Southey contemplated, for he told Birch on 20th June that his *Conversations* would be "published in another month, but some of them will not appear."

Southey proved a loyal friend in this difficult business, as in everything else. Some of Taylor's objections had the impertinent presumption of pomposity, as when he described the Burke-Grenville dialogue as giving "the popular Account of the Cause of Burke's Change of Party, but I think not the true one." Southey rightly dismissed such objections, but he also refused to delete sundry expressions, either tending to be libellous or otherwise offensive, about which Taylor, as a publisher, had legitimate cause for qualms. Taylor objected to the "Elizabethan" frankness of Oliver Cromwell's exclamation to Walter

Noble, "I must piss upon these fire-brands, before I can make them tractable." Knowing that the suppression of such an honest old English word was pandering to the humbug which never failed to infuriate Landor, Southey insisted on its retention, though Taylor informed Hare that the retention would make the difference between his printing a thousand copies or two hundred and fifty less. It is significant of the advance of Victorian propriety that, when the dialogue was reprinted in 1846, Landor was prevailed upon, probably by Forster, to spoil the simple force of Cromwell's words by the alteration, "I must spit outright (or worse) upon these crackling bouncing fire-brands."

For months Taylor continued in objecting labour. He suggested Simpkin and Marshall as publishers who might not share his scruples; he even offered to have the book printed while Hare found another publisher. His most troublesome objection was to the Middleton-Magliabechi dialogue on the efficacy of prayer. He was a devout person, and his publishing list always contained a proportion of theological books; the cheerful ridicule of ecclesiastical conventions put into Middleton's mouth genuinely shocked him. Southey could not see why Taylor should object to opinions for which the author, not the publisher, would be held responsible, and refused to accommodate him. While Southey wrote from a distance, however, Hare was in personal touch with Taylor, and fearing that Taylor's obstinate attitude might result in a final refusal to publish the book, on his own responsibility he deleted the most offending passages, including the mischievous footnote guying Italian superstitious belief in the miraculous powers of Saint Maria Bagnesi. Defending his action to Landor, he did not hesitate to say that, while he thought Taylor had a mistaken notion of what was morally wrong, he himself considered "the argument against prayer, as an argument, good for nothing"; he also might be mistaken, but the matter was not worth further fuss, and anyhow he could not blame Taylor for "acting conscientiously according to his judgment."

Taylor's more practical objections were inspired by Landor's ferocious attacks on contemporary politicians. To Southey, Landor defended his bitterness against the Tory government of Liverpool and Canning by citing his maltreatment by the British legation at Florence:

> Why have these rascals suffered me to be insulted by their agents? . . . Out of four thousand English here I was selected for slight and contempt! the only man in all the four thousand who ever acted with disinterestedness for the public good, or who will be remembered a year after his death. . . . It could not have happened in Russia or in Turkey. In those countries men who are superior to others in virtue and intelligence are promoted and rewarded. I wanted neither. . . . I would only have avoided disrespect, disdain, and insult. So long as such wretches are in power and employment, I am the avowed and unmitigable enemy of those who countenance them, and of the government that allows it.

He writhed under the prevailing fashion for men of mediocrity in high places. In Lord Liverpool he recognised a transparent mediocrity, who, like Baldwin and Chamberlain a century later, studiously avoided the inclusion in the government of any brilliant individual, lest his brilliance by contrast reveal the blatant limitations of his colleagues. "Our affairs," he wrote to Birch in May 1823, "are now under the direction of a fellow who has no sense of honour, public or private; so ignorant that he did not know that Walcheren was pestilential, and France perfidious." In the dialogue between Pitt and Canning, Pitt advises the junior statesman:

> Employ men of less knowledge and perspicacity than yourself, if you can find them. Do not let any stand too close or too much above; because in both positions they may look down into your shallows and see the weeds at the bottom.

In the last of his preserved letters to Walter Birch, received on 16th December 1823, Landor wrote: "We are now living, politically, from hand to mouth, as the people say—upon shifts and expedients, and the people of England has no more a repre-

sentation than the people of Turkey." Yet he built no hopes of betterment on the possibility of such parliamentary reform as came in 1832. For, says Pitt to Canning, "the most honest and independent members of Parliament are elected by the rotten boroughs," because "they pay down their own money, and give their own votes: they are not subservient to the aristocracy nor to the treasury."

The Pitt-Canning dialogue was not published till 1829, two years after Canning's death had removed the possibility of prosecution for libel. But its tone and ideas are so closely echoed in Landor's letters of six years earlier that it seems likely that the dialogue was among those submitted to Taylor, and rejected as too libellous for publication. Landor himself became so conscious of his violence against the government that his sense of delicacy constrained him, as he explained to Southey, to cancel the proposed dedication to Wordsworth, lest the poet should suffer embarrassment from association with such rebellious criticism. While the Middleton argument progressed, Taylor sought counsel's opinion "on the propriety and safety of publishing those Passages which were considered libellous." Brougham "refused to pronounce upon it in the present State of the Law of Libel"; James Scarlett, soon to be Attorney-General, was then approached, and Taylor transcribed his opinion for Hare:

> It is really impossible to affirm that any Composition which is not a Hymn or a Prayer may not be deemed a Libel. I entertain no Doubt but that if any one of the Passages referred to were indicted the Judge would give his Opinion to the Jury that it was a Libel. Yet I think they are not Passages which any Attorney General would prosecute, and that they are above the Comprehension of those who manage the affairs of the Constitutional Association.

With a flash of shrewd humour, Taylor remarked that "this opinion is itself more libellous than any thing in the Work," and risking the plunge, published the two volumes of *Imaginary Conversations* in April 1824.

§ 2

On 29th February Landor's copies of the book had been accompanied by a letter from Southey:

> In looking over your volumes, you will, I think, wherever you perceive that a passage has been struck out, perceive at the same time for what reason it was omitted. The reason for every omission was such that, I am persuaded, you would, without hesitation, have assented to it, had you been on the spot. A most powerful and original book it is, in any one page of which—almost in any single sentence—I should have discovered the author, if it had come into my hands as an anonymous publication. Notice it must needs attract; but I suspect that it will be praised the most by those with whom you have the least sympathy, and that the English and Scottish Liberals may perhaps forgive you even for being my friend.

Having done his best to preserve Landor from the editorial scissors, Southey thus sought to prepare him for the poisoned darts of reviewers. Probably he had already seen what the *Quarterly Review* had to say, for *Imaginary Conversations* was reviewed in its January number. Gifford was on his last legs, but he did not resign the editorship of the *Quarterly* till the following autumn. If he had been in robust health, the *Imaginary Conversations* might have suffered a savage scourging; as it was, Southey's influence was insufficient to save the book from supercilious sneers. For there was no love lost between Gifford and Southey; Gifford would not entertain the possibility of Southey's succession to his editorial chair, being convinced that "the gentleman in the North would, in a few numbers, ruin the *Review* if *he* had the management." So the *Quarterly* condemned heavily. It affected contemptuous surprise that "such eminent individuals" as Southey and Porson should "meet only to agree upon the merits of Mr. Wordsworth's poetry! that they talk as if they were writing commentaries and tired of it." It dwelt upon Landor's "absurdities and perversities," while

"far from denying that he is a man of knowledge and abilities, which nothing but his singular deficiency of judgment could have rendered useless." It deplored "a spirit of pugnacity which, while it takes all its tenderness from criticism, satisfies us that rebuke is wholesome." Its final summary declared that "whatever measures of absurdity there may be in Mr. Landor's work, . . . there is also in it a good deal to be admired, and some little to be approved."

In the Tory *Blackwood's Magazine*, Wilson used the Southey-Porson dialogue as a peg for one of his savage outbursts of personal spleen against Wordsworth. The only puff came from Julius Hare, who was enabled by Taylor to review the book in the *London Magazine*. Hare used the most exalted phrases of praise to illustrate his sincere belief that the book would "live as long as English literature lived"; he included also a timely plea that such "absurdities and perversities" as the *Quarterly* remarked should not deter readers from recognising its greater merits. The *Edinburgh Review* was not so deterred. From that stronghold of Scottish Liberalism, as Southey had foreseen, came the justest independent review, and from the most vitriolic pen of the day, William Hazlitt's. Hazlitt did not fail to make full play with the "absurdities and perversities," nor to air his traditional hostility against Southey and Wordsworth. But he recognised "a power of thought" and "a variety and vigour of style" which made Landor excellent "wherever excellence could consist with singularity," and allowed himself to bestow the highest praise on the classical dialogues. Hare duly reported that Hazlitt was "among the greatest admirers of the *Conversations*," and Hazlitt himself did not miss the earliest available opportunity of making Landor's acquaintance.

Where the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly* led, the smaller fry followed. *Imaginary Conversations* was not a book which left editorial offices for the second-hand booksellers'; all the review copies found notices. It was no publishing sensation, but in July Taylor found that "the Trade are beginning to send for more Copies of the Work, which shows that it is moving," and he

decided that the demand was sufficient for a second edition. Hare communicated this good news to Landor; was he to reserve the additional dialogues to make a third volume in the second edition the following spring, or should he prepare a third volume for separate publication at Christmas? Unluckily he added optimistically that he hoped to "persuade Taylor" to reinstate the Middleton omissions in the new edition; "as so much has come out without offending, he will perhaps not be quite so scrupulous next time."

Landor cared nothing for reviews. All his life he was consistent in his arrogant contempt for the opinions of his inferiors; he cared no more now for the commendation of a reviewer than he had for Dr. James's praise of his schoolboy verses. "I never ask what is the public opinion of anything I write," he wrote to Southey on 4th November; "God forbid it should be favourable; for more people think injudiciously than judiciously." The praise he valued was that of his peers. Southey said no more than he said to others; in June he wrote to Caroline Bowles, "I wish Landor's book may fall in your way; still more do I wish that you could see Landor himself, who talks as that book is written, as if he spoke in thunder and lightning." He informed Landor in December that "the book is making you known, as you ought to be; and it is one of those very few which nothing can put aside." On the same paper Wordsworth sent a message. He had not written before owing to his eye trouble, but now he assured Landor that "your dialogues are worthy of you, and a great acquisition to literature." Like Hazlitt, he liked the classical ones best—"most of all that between Tully and his brother"—and he looked forward to the third volume. Landor received this valuable double letter with "incredible delight"; "never," he exclaimed, "did two such hands pass over the same paper, unless when Barrow was solving some problem set before him by Newton."

The praise of two such celebrated writers encouraged his resentment against a publisher's presuming to meddle with his manuscripts. He was less concerned with the Middleton omis-

sions than about some personal allusions which Southey had thought likely to create trouble for him in Florence. There were two such omissions in the Puntomichino-Talcranagh dialogue—one indignantly exposing Prince Borghese's heartless treatment of Napoleon's sister, the "once lovely, generous and confiding" Pauline, the other an anecdote in derision of Lady Morgan's recent plaudits of an English patriot at Florence. He reproached Southey for suppressing this story "lest I should be assassinated," declaring, "had I my choice of a death, it should be this, unless I could render some essential service to mankind by any other."

He was in no mood for friendliness with his publisher, but so long as Hare, as intermediary, prevented direct dealings, there was no opportunity for trouble. Taylor proved obdurate about Middleton on prayer; "I refused Lord Byron's *Vision of Judgment*," he told Hare, "yet I did not think *that* a Production so likely to prove pernicious as the article in Question." Proofs of the new edition were ready in November, but the delay in publication was Landor's own fault. Informing Southey that Hare had announced the third volume as likely to be ready for January publication, Landor remarked that Hare had not then received "a conversation between the late Duc de Richelieu and others." He was continually sending off dialogues to Hare as he finished them—one, between Bloody Mary and Philip of Spain, was lost in transit—and Hare eventually proposed holding up the printer "until I ascertain more clearly how far the dialogues I have will extend."

During the consequent delay, Landor suddenly realised that he had received no money from Taylor. With his haphazard notions about money, the idea of demanding an account from a publisher might never have occurred to him unless somebody else had suggested it, for he had never previously profited from any publication, but usually had the printer's bill to pay. He wanted to buy some pictures as a speculation—"if I had had 3000 £ eight years ago," he told his sister Ellen in 1828, "I would have cleared 12,000 in the first two years"—and prob-

ably he lamented his inability to do so in the hearing of friends. Among such friends were Hazlitt, visiting Florence on his honeymoon with his second wife, and Leigh Hunt, who exclaimed that surely he must have money from his book. Immediately there revived, like a nightmare, the spectral figures of Betham and Gabell; he saw himself being victimised by Taylor as by the Llanthony litigants. He was convinced when Hazlitt, in perfect good faith, explained that the usual profit-sharing agreement provided that the publisher, taking half the profits, should undertake the whole risk. Nor had either Hunt or Hazlitt anything good to say of Taylor. Some eight years before, Hunt had had dealings with him ending in his taking his work elsewhere, while Hazlitt felt an immediate soreness because Taylor had refused to make him an advance on some proposed magazine articles before he left for the continent.

On hearing from Landor, Hare put the matter delicately to Taylor. Landor had "been buying some pictures, and perhaps in the state of his property, would find a little help in paying for them convenient; and it is unpleasant for anybody, even without Landor's pride, to speak twice on such subjects." Unluckily, instead of continuing communications through Hare, Taylor wrote direct to Landor. He began badly—by expressing his regret for such omissions he had caused to be made in the dialogues; this alone was enough to make Landor damn the fellow for his impudence. Then facetiously he regretted another omission—that he had not placed at Landor's bankers the half-profit of the first edition—but added that perhaps he might be excused for not having done so, as the cost of the second edition might absorb the balance due and leave Landor in his debt.

This—as Hunt, and probably also Hazlitt, pointed out—was assuming that Landor intended to allow publication of the second edition on the same terms as the first, and Hare had so far made no such agreement on Landor's behalf. Taylor might have argued that, as Landor, on first offering the book,

had munificently proposed to bear any loss on the publication, he was justified in supposing Landor to be little interested in the matter of profit, but he could not exculpate himself from having neglected to pay up promptly or from having intended to make a good bargain out of Landor's carelessness of business. Landor replied in royal wrath on 1st April 1825, and enclosed to Hare a copy of his letter. "Greatly do I regret that I have had anything to do with so insincere a man, with such an impudent coxcomb," he wrote:

> He knows very well what I hear from Mr. Hazlitt, that those book sellers who engage to take half the profits never take only half the risk; yet with this uncustomary advantage on his side, and having sold all the copies three months ago, he delays the payment of what is due on the plea that I may hereafter be indebted to him for something not ordered or contemplated by me. . . . I shall consult Mr Leigh Hunt, and other English authors now at Florence, on what is best to do or say in this business.

On 19th April Taylor wrote to Hare in high indignation. He would not "condescend to justify myself to the Writer," but wrote to Hare "to keep my place in your good opinion." Landor's "whole Letter is in fact Contemptible," and "perhaps the Presence of Hazlitt may help to explain the Mystery." But Taylor knew he was in the wrong. Three days later, on the 22nd, he admitted that Hare was "probably right in thinking that I should have attended sooner to Landor's wish to have the Balance of his Account paid to his Banker." He had now paid £89.17*s*.8d. to Landor's bankers, Herries and Co.; he ventured, in lame excuse for not having done so before, that his partner, Hessey, "pays and receives everything." In his anger with Landor, he asserted vaingloriously that "I renounce him and all his Works with the greatest Willingness," but maturer reflection brought sad regrets, while he visited his spleen on the unfortunate Hazlitt.

> What there is good in him may be said to be of the Devil. How different from the Genius of Landor.

Sadly he found himself "compelled to decline all future Interest in Landor's Works," and meantime he had cause for grave anxiety. Of the second edition, a thousand copies were in process of printing; fifteen hundred of the third volume—Taylor had thought himself in on a good thing, for this was twice the number of the first edition—were "provided". He had to face a dead loss on these preparations, he feared a lawsuit from the "Blindness of Landor's Fury," and felt uneasiness on receiving a formal communication from Landor's agent and cousin, Walter Landor of Rugeley.

Taylor was no rogue like Landor's "Welsh annoyancers"; he had merely overstepped himself in his eager pursuit of a good bargain. Stoically he sustained his loss. But Landor, though not victimised, conceived himself a victim. To Southey he stated the case fairly. He had sanctioned the printing of the third volume, but was not then aware that the second edition had gone to press. He had not intended that Taylor should have the second on the same terms as the first edition, and fairly argued that Taylor's ordering double the number of copies of the third volume was evidence of his intentions to take advantage of him. But then, losing all sense of reason or proportion, he flew into such another passion of agonised self-pity as when the original *Conversations* had been mislaid.

His first villany in making me disappoint the person with whom I had agreed for the pictures instigated me to throw my fourth volume, in its imperfect state, into the fire, and has cost me nine-tenths of my fame as a writer. His next villany will entail perhaps a chancery suit on my children—for at its commencement I blow my brains out. . . . Mr. Hazlitt, Mr. Leigh Hunt, Lord Dillon, Mr. Brown, and other authors of various kinds, have been made acquainted, one from another, with this whole affair, and they speak of it as a thing unprecedented. . . . This cures me forever, if I live, of writing what could be published; and I will take good care that my son shall not suffer in the same way. Not a line of any kind will I leave behind me. My children shall be carefully warned against literature. To fence, to swim, to speak French, are the most they shall learn.

Southey replied tactfully, wisely consoling, but hitting the note of reproof most likely to touch Landor in expressing annoyance that such a writer should destroy a single line, or forbear writing one, because a bookseller showed himself no better than the spirit of trade had made him. Actually Landor had probably destroyed no more of value than after his previous frenzy. The fourth volume was in an "imperfect state;" listing its proposed contents in a letter of 4th November 1824, he confessed that he had only "composed parts." The gems among them were to be Tiberius and Agrippina, and Cornelia and Caius Gracchus. But he added that "hardly anything was done" in the latter, the character of Agrippina baffled him for a year before he finished it as "Tiberius and Vipsania," and work was suspended on the rest because he thought three volumes enough. As to the pictures, the vendor may have had to wait a little for his money, but Landor bought nearly a hundred pounds worth.

Hare loyally defended Taylor. He reminded Landor of the words he put into his own mouth in "Florentine, English Visitor, and Landor"—"lose nothing, as you hope for heaven, of that which may give you a better opinion of your fellow creatures" —and exclaimed, "O that you yourself would more regularly act according to this principle, and believe, when you see something that appears not quite right, that it may as often be a mistake as a misdeed!" Landor accepted the rebuke in silence. He retained his own opinion of Taylor's conduct, but he was deeply grateful to Hare and did not wish to lose such a valued agent. He had already written three letters to Hare about further publishing plans, but, said Hare, "your second letter contradicts the first, your third says you will have nothing to do with either Longman or Constable, and I fear a fourth may come with a new scheme." Asking which he was to do, Hare added, "After having failed once so egregiously, I do not like trusting anything but your express desire." Landor responded generously; Hare had full authority to act for the best according to his own judgment. One example of consistency in Landor totally escaped Forster: when he put his trust in anybody,

he always trusted without reserve. Julius Hare was one who did not let him down, and for the next six years he entirely managed Landor's publishing affairs.

§ 3

Throughout this time, while he wrote and published the first two volumes of *Imaginary Conversations*, Landor lived at the Palazzo Medici in Florence. In September 1825 he took a three years' lease of the Villa Castiglione, two miles from the city out of the Porta San Niccolo, in the hills. He made this move to suit his wife's health, and to relieve his own tendency to melancholy, to which, he said, "I am sometimes very much disposed." He left the Palazzo Medici at the end of 1825, following a fracas with the owner, which was amusingly related by Seymour Kirkup. Landor had written to the old marquis, accusing him of having seduced away his coachman.

> The marquis [said Kirkup] enjoyed no very good name, and this had exasperated Landor the more. Mrs. Landor was sitting in the drawing room the day after, where I and some others were, when the marquis came strutting in without removing his hat. But he had scarcely advanced three steps from the door when Landor walked up to him quickly and knocked his hat off, then took him by the arm and turned him out. You should have heard Landor's shout of laughter at his own anger when it was all over, inextinguishable laughter which none of us could resist. Immediately after he sent the marquis warning by the hands of a policeman, which is reckoned an affront, and quitted his house at the end of the year.

A young cousin of Landor's, Edward Willson Landor, who visited him at Florence, emphasised that such demonstrations of arrogance arose, not from a snobbish sense of self-importance as a gentleman, but from "the vast ever-present conviction of the infinity of his mental superiority." He never forgot the slight of the Duke of Beaufort in declining to make him a mag-

istrate at Llanthony, and despised all rank, especially official rank, regarding the aristocracy of intellect as a title to superiority over everybody. "The smallest unintentional appearance of slight, from a superior in rank," said Edward Landor, "would at any moment rouse him into a fury of passion, never thoroughly allayed till its last force had spent itself in an epigram." During his first years at Florence, he continued at loggerheads with the British legation, because he conceived himself treated with insufficient deference by the minister, and exaggerating into insults every omission of what he considered the courtesy due to him, regarded himself as a victim of official persecution. Writing to Southey at this time, he congratulated himself with savage irony on being no contemptible man to have managed to exclude, from every kind of preferment in the state, not only his chattering children then in the next room, but his posterity to the latest descendants.

Some such imagined slights from Prince Borghese and Lord John Russell incited his vengeance against them in the passages of the Puntomichino dialogue suppressed by Taylor. His strained relations with the legation closed the doors of fashionable society against him, and visitors to Florence had to seek him out with letters of introduction. As for the Florentines, he wrote in *High and Low Life in Italy:*

> I take no interest whatever in the affairs of Italians: I visit none of them: I admit none of them within my doors. I never go to the gaming house, to the coffee house, to the theatre, to the palace, or to the Church.

In "Florentine, English Visitor, and Landor," he asserts of the "Granduke," as he always wrote of the Grand Duke of Florence, that he was "the only Englishman in Florence who did not attend his court, and the only one he ever omitted to salute." He "never let any of the natives" enter his house except old Medici's daughter-in-law and his own daughter's music master.

The Florentines he described as "beyond all others, a treacherous, tricking, mercenary race." When the painter Middleton

came to Florence in 1827 with an introduction from his sisters, he hastened to recommend him to three specific places of lodging, in case he "may not know what scoundrels the greater part of the Florence innkeepers are, not to say thieves and assassins." He had incessant trouble with his domestic servants. To his sister Ellen he wrote in 1833:

> I wish it was possible to get servants from England; I would not have one Italian. I am well convinced that, in 18 months, I should save greatly more than the expense of bringing them over. No woman will cook here, nor open a door. . . . Every Italian is a thief by nature, and no foreigner can gain the slightest redress.

In reply to the charge that he was "prejudiced against the Tuscans in general, the Florentines in particular," he retorted that he had met within "twenty miles from Florence some of the best people I have ever yet conversed with."

> The country folks are frank, hospitable, courteous, laborious, disinterested, and eager to assist one another. I have sat among them by the hour, almost the only company in the nation I could ever endure half as long; and at the first time of seeing me, the whole family has told me its most intimate concerns.

From his earliest boyhood in Warwickshire, he possessed the genial knack of winning the confidence and affection of simple folk; it was the same charm by which he delighted the market women at Tours.

He was a more familiar figure at the public library and in the shops of second-hand booksellers and picture-dealers than in the villas and palaces of Florence. Once or twice a year Southey and Wordsworth sent him parcels of books from England, mostly their own latest works and the new books of other leading contemporaries; in return, Landor sent huge consignments of rare old volumes he had picked up. Often his gifts suffered in transit, either from ship rats or salt water; Wordsworth wrote once lamenting the condition of a valuable *De Re Rustica* and a venerable Bible—"sorely damaged, the binding detached from the book, the leaves stained and I fear rotted."

In *High and Low Life in Italy* Landor tells something of his experiences, not only with dealers, but with impoverished aristocrats like old Medici (the Marchese Scampa arraigned before the Cardinal-Legate) who supplemented their incomes by selling their heirlooms. He obtained from Medici a half length portrait of Marie de Medici, which he sent over to his sister Elizabeth. His interest in pictures dated from his visit to Paris of 1802, when he had studied at the Louvre the Italian masters plundered by Napoleon. Before his father's death, he had purchased a Titian and a Hogarth; he had lost by the sale at Llanthony a rare and valuable collection. "Florence," he wrote near the close of his life, "is richer in works of art than any other city in the world," and at Florence he not only filled his house with his purchases, but learned at first hand much about Italian painting. Forster lightly disparaged Landor's knowledge of art, inferring that he was famous among his friends for making presents of pictures which he had been deceived into believing the work of old masters. But Landor's knowledge was far beyond Forster's equipment to appreciate. In art, as in literature, he was no catholic critic. He esteemed a work for originality and historical value, often without due regard for its execution. Visiting him at Bath in 1852, Lowell saw a room full of early Italian paintings, which he pronounced "nearly all aggressively bad." This was the time when Forster knew him well, and most of the pictures Lowell saw were the fruits of Landor's bargains with Bath dealers, who offered a less fertile hunting-ground than the dealers of Florence. The best of his Florentine collecting were given before he left Florence to his sisters, his brother Henry and other friends. "Landor anticipated the public taste in the admiration of the early Italian schools," wrote Monckton Milnes, who saw his collection at Florence in 1833; "thus amid some pretenders to high birth and dignity, his walls presented a genuine company of such masters as Masaccio, Ghirlandaio, Gozzoli, Filippo Lippi and Fra Angelico."

Landor forestalled by a generation the Pre-Raphaelite taste made fashionable by Rossetti and Holman Hunt. Raphael was

for him the greatest of painters. "I delight in Titian, I love Correggio, I wonder at the vastness of Michel-Angelo," he wrote; "I admire, love, wonder and then fall down, before Raffael." Pietro Perugino, he said, "was worthy of leading him by the hand;" in his opinion, he told his sister, Perugino "comes immediately after Raffael & Frate Bartolommeo." He was annoyed when his friend Middleton, in 1828, "could not be prevailed upon to buy a Raffael for 500 £. It is worth 2,000, and will bring it ere long." But he was the means of Middleton's buying a Perugino for £70—"I could have had it, if I had had the money, for 15 pounds. It is worth about 300." Later on, he purchased old paintings taken from suppressed monasteries at Pistoia. Writing in 1833 to his brother Henry, he offered him, as "an admirer of old workmanship," "about one hundred pictures, from the restoration of painting in Italy down to 1500." The Kings of Prussia and Bavaria were "the only two men, who ever made so large a collection of these interesting things," He himself was "the only private man, who possesses a Cimabue, the restorer of that art." He offered them to his brother because they had been put up in his children's bedroom, but his wife "either feared or pretended to fear, that they might fall upon their heads and knock their brains out, so she threw them into a closet pêle mêle, where nobody can ever see them."

They cost me hardly anything, some of them only a few shillings each, so that you, who have paid so much for me, cannot hesitate on that score. They are such things as ought to be in Warwick Castle. There are some things in them, which it is evident that Raffael copied.

This was a value which Forster failed to appreciate. Landor was a true enthusiast; he would hang the ancient, blackened daub of some forgotten painter beside the work of a genuine master to show how genius had perfected an idea derived from a lesser predecessor.

Relating how Landor "lived economically and dressed very shabbily," Kirkup mentioned his "buying a number of very

ancient pictures which were not esteemed at that time" as his only indulgence. Nor was it an expensive hobby with him, for his values remained those of the Florence bargainers. Visiting the National Gallery with him in 1836, Crabb Robinson was "amused" by "his odd judgments"—"a small Correggio, with the frame, he valued at 14*s*." Kirkup shared Landor's enthusiasm for old pictures, and in 1839 made the discovery at Florence of Dante's portrait by Giotto. In the *Examiner* of 16th August 1840, Landor applauded the discovery, praising Giotto as "the most illustrious of the Italians, their earliest great painter," though at the same time he annoyed Kirkup by giving all credit for the find to a fellow-researcher, Aubrey Bezzi. Francis Hare was also an enthusiast, and when he bought a Raphael for four hundred louis, Landor described it as "a Raffael, indeed, but a copy from Pietro Perugino."

Pictures were Landor's life-long hobby. But his children were his absorbing passion in these years at Florence. His love for them, like all his emotions, was extravagant, consuming, agonising, and like all his other passions, he permitted it blind, unbridled rein. From the beginning, he realised that his delight in them would be limited to the duration of their childhood; remarking the approach of his fiftieth birthday on 30th January 1825, he wrote to Southey, "We may both reasonably hope to see our children men, but I would rather see mine a child than lord chancellor." He seems to have entertained no hope that by wise understanding, discriminating sympathy, and the sheer strength of his devotion, he might win his children's abiding confidence and attain the rarest and most beautiful human relationship—perfect sympathy and fellowship between father and son. Landor often knew himself far better than his friends credited. He was an egoist by instinct, an enthusiast by nature and habit; in the pursuit of what he conceived to be true and just, it was not in his nature to abate a tittle of his determination. At fifty, he was in full sail for fulfilment of his mission in life, and he knew that the course of that fulfilment would not admit the selflessness, the subordination of his own individuality to

that of another's, which is required to win the questioning trust of adolescence. In the dominating features of his arrogance, there lurked here and there odd little wry wrinkles of humility, and while he lavished caresses on the child in his lap, he never deceived himself that such happiness could last beyond the span of a few short years. He was an egoist, but also a philosopher, and would shed no tears over departed joys, nor wear sackcloth in the ashes of a lost romance.

In his adoration of his children, he lived in a fool's paradise, delighting in the joys of the moment, without a thought for the possibility of a bleak dawning of the morrow. His mode of bringing them up was a characteristic mixture of wisdom and impracticality. To Birch he wrote in April 1819, when his eldest son was little more than a year old:

> I smile at your idea that four or five years hence I shall be deep in plans of education. My plan is to have no plan at all. I shall teach my son Latin and Greek, as I teach him Italian and English, by practice. One year is enough for a language, if the mind is never puzzled by grammars. . . . Facciolati, the purest of modern Latinists . . . banishes grammar from education. I had fixed my intention before I read his oration on this subject, from observing that all well-educated persons speak grammatically without grammar, and that all learned persons write ungrammatically with it. To swim and fence and love cleanliness are the three things to be taught first. I intend to keep him always among women, that he may be desirous of pleasing, and learn a gracefulness and ease of manners which few Englishmen (educated in England) can acquire. . . . There are three places which my son shall never have my consent to enter—gaming-houses, brothels, and colleges. I hope he will be habitually fond of gardening—a great preservation from mischief and conductor to health. I shall repress too evident a desire for study, if he should have it. Health, good humour, and the habitude of pleasing are the only objects I keep constantly in view.

These designs Landor carried out in the years which followed. His children were the chief topic of his letters to his mother, who, as the tenth year since her son's departure from England

drew near, began to hanker after his return. Her hints were the more pathetic by being veiled by apparent carelessness—Landor inherited pride from his mother as well as his father—and she hoped to secure another sight of her son by urging the needs of his eldest boy's education. But, thanking her for her "kindness in offering to place him in some English school," Landor wrote on 2nd December, 1824:

> At present he is not quite seven years old. . . . I do not think I could live a single month without him, and it is not my intention to send him ever to any school where I cannot see him every day. We have in Florence an excellent schoolmistress, who takes ten or twelve young scholars, none above eight years old. Here they learn English, Italian, French and dancing, as well as drawing and accounts. . . . Latin and Greek I can teach him myself, and intend to do so in the spring. . . . If he ever goes to any public school, it shall be Eton, and that five or six years hence, for about three years.

He did not exaggerate his horror of even the shortest separation from his children, for, though he had longed to see Rome ever since his arrival in Italy, he remarked to his sister Ellen in February 1825, "As for sending Arnold to England, I refused an invitation to Rome last year, because I could not leave him." About the same time he confided to Southey his anxiety over his wife's proposal to accompany her brother on a visit to England. His favourite sister-in-law, Laura Thuillier, had lately married Colonel Edward Stopford, to whom he dedicated the first volume of *Imaginary Conversations;* another of his wife's sisters was about to leave for India to be married. His wife hesitated between leaving her two-year-old son Walter, and her desire to revisit her family circle. "I neither persuade it nor oppose it," said Landor, "but I shall be very unhappy without the two children she takes with her." She did not go, however, for she found herself pregnant of her fourth and youngest child, Landor's third son, Charles, born 5th August 1825.

His wife's fragile health after this fourth childbirth was the motive for removal to the Villa Castiglione. In November 1825

the children were "all in excellent health and the baby promises to be one of the strongest of the party." Expressing satisfaction that his family had escaped contagion from a recent epidemic of small-pox, Landor confided to his sister Ellen, with exaggerated violence, one of his many opinions far in advance of his time: "In my opinion every child ought to be inoculated with the vaccine at three months by order of the magistrates, and every parent who resists it to be imprisoned for a year, and in case another catches the distemper, for fourteen." With the move to the Villa Castiglione, he dispelled his mother's hopes of his return to England by telling his sister:

> I shall pass my life upon the continent, having met with so many acts of injustice and unkindness in England. Eleven years have domesticated me; and the children may live together after my death.

He wished "Julia would consent to live entirely in the country, but she cannot live without some company in the evening, one or two, old or young." For his part, he "could live and even enjoy life, if I never were to see any other face, or hear any other voice, than those of my children." Leigh Hunt relates how he played with his children like "a real schoolboy," and was "as ready to complain of an undue knock as he was to laugh, shout, and scramble himself." He was their Babbo, his daughter was "my Julietta," and the youngest son's affectionate diminutive was "Carlino." "To see the happiness of children was always to me the first of all happiness," he wrote to Southey; "How pure and brilliant is it in them! how soon it runs over the brink, and among what shouts and transports!"

§ 4

In spite of his boast, Landor continued to see with pleasure many faces besides his children's. His *flair* for making lasting friendships never forsook him. Dr. Parr died in March 1825;

Landor had not seen him since the visit after his marriage in 1811, and their correspondence had languished. Proud to see his faith in his former *protégé* justified, the old man felt sad at receiving no word from Landor in his hour of triumph. "How is Walter?" he asked. "I hope he is well. O, he has shown a mighty mind, a mighty mind." Only a month before Parr's death, Landor heard of this from his sister Ellen, and not knowing whether Taylor had yet actually published the third volume of *Conversations*, he had sent an addition to his sister, with the instruction, "Pray send it immediately to Dr. Parr, *unless* the book is actually out." This addition was a dedication to Parr whose loss he afterwards acknowledged with Lord Guilford's in the fifth volume of *Conversations*. His sister Elizabeth made him a present of Parr's portrait, which reached him in 1827; "he had not exactly that expression when I saw him last," but "it brings back to me the features of my delightful old friend."

Death also removed Walter Birch in 1829. The last of Landor's preserved letters to him discussed the imminent publication of the first *Imaginary Conversations*, some thirty-five years after their friendship began at Rugby. Sometimes intervals of a year or more lapsed in their correspondence, but each wrote to the other always with the old affection, free intimacy, and enthusiasm for discussion of classical scholarship.

Armitage Brown, Francis Hare, and Kirkup continued his closest intimates. Another crony was Byron's acquaintance, Gould Francis Leckie, whom Kirkup remembered as elderly, "very jocose and satirical, whom Landor liked as much as his wife disliked him." Through Francis Hare, Landor met his brother Augustus and his cousin, Amelia Dashwood, a charming and beautiful widow, whom Landor eagerly hoped Francis would marry. Lord Dillon (the 13th Viscount, 1777–1832) was another member of his circle. "Landor was much attached to Lord Dillon," said Kirkup, whose sketch of Dillon collaborated with Leigh Hunt's to reveal a personality peculiarly in sympathy with Landor's. "The gallant Viscount was a cavalier

of the old school of the Meadowses and Newcastles, with something of the O'Neal superadded; and instead of wasting his words upon tyrants or Mr. Pitt, ought to have been eternally at the head of his brigade, charging mercenaries on his war horse, and meditating romantic stories." He had an Irish temper and an explosive violence in expressing unconventional opinions, disturbing to polite society, which forgave him much for being a lord, as well as for his handsome bearing and natural charm. He was reckoned a little odd, and for his old world courtesy and his habit of reciting poetry, "people laughed at him."

> Not so Landor. He showed the most courteous attention; and often gave him a word of advice, so gently as never to offend him. He used to say that Lord Dillon's smiling handsome fair face was like a ray of sunshine in Florence.

This tenderness for the eccentric Dillon illustrates the change which had come over Landor since his sister Elizabeth had reproved him for laughing in people's faces. It also reveals the key to his talent for making abiding friendships. When he found in a man something he appreciated, he valued him for it, and in return for all he gained, he gave freely of himself. Dillon was a frank and fearless rebel like himself, and Landor tolerated and humoured his oddities, however irritating, for the sake of the admiration and affection inspired by his fine qualities.

Such dialogues as Washington-Franklin and Puntomichino-Talcranagh suggest that Landor derived much of his understanding of Ireland from Dillon. Washington emphasises the merits of the Irish, and the "centuries of misrule" which brought them to a condition more hopeless than any other nation or tribe upon the globe; Franklin demands the abolition of tithes and that, "to pacify and reclaim the people, leases to middlemen must be annulled." At Dillon's house Landor met Lamartine, then attached to the French Legation at Florence; as a poet he pronounced him "a mere versifier, fantastically grave, and epigrammatically devout," and the Lamartine-Thiers

dialogue, written twenty years later suggests that, while he respected Lamartine's politics, he was alienated by the younger man's personal ambition.

These were the "two or three friends, a manageable number," whom he mentioned to his sister Ellen in 1825. There were "some dozens who call on me, but whom I cannot receive." Recalling Hazlitt's arrival at Florence in March 1825, Kirkup said:

> He wished to pay Landor a visit, but was advised not, unless he was well introduced. Armitage Brown, who was Landor's greatest friend here, offered him a letter; but Hazlitt said he would beard the lion in his den, and he walked up to his house one winter's morning in nankeen shorts and white stockings; was made much of by the royal animal; and often returned—at night; for Landor was much out in the day, in all weathers.

Hazlitt's poverty of attire would not call for Landor's notice, for he himself dressed so shabbily that servants offended him "by taking him for a beggar or poor devil." The best hated man of letters of his day, Hazlitt was not everybody's appetite, but here again Landor immediately appreciated the rich ore beneath an unprepossessing appearance. Hazlitt had strong opinions and maintained them fiercely; they found much in common and developed a strong mutual respect. Personal liking, rather than genuine admiration for his work, inspired Landor to insert in a note to "Southey and Porson" in his second edition that, in Hazlitt's *Table Talk,* "there are strokes as vivid and vigorous as in any work edited these hundred years." For, long afterwards, he confided to Forster that, while he found Hazlitt's books "delightful to read," he would not "get much valuable criticism out of them—Coleridge was worth fifty of him in that respect."

Moving on to Rome, Hazlitt wrote to Landor on 9th April, telling him of his travels and expressing himself "much gratified that you are pleased with the *Spirit of the Age.*" Some weeks later, he called again at Florence on his homeward journey, visiting Landor, Dillon, Kirkup, and Brown. And after his return, he recalled his conversations with Landor in an essay on

"The Vatican," while he also reviewed appreciatively the third volume of *Imaginary Conversations* in the *London Weekly Review* for 14th June 1828. They never met again, for, when Landor returned to England, Hazlitt, three years his junior, was already dead.

In the autumn of 1825 he received another welcome caller in Shelley's friend, Thomas Jefferson Hogg. Francis Hare was with Landor when Hogg sent in his card, with the name of Dr. Lambe, Landor's old Warwick friend, on it as introduction. Handing the card to Hare, Landor exclaimed that he now thought himself La Fontaine, "with all the better company of the beasts about me." Hogg, like Hazlitt, was a man much disliked; he had force of character and a rebellious hatred of humbug, which led him to shock the weak nerves of Shelley's relatives with his biography of the poet. Landor liked him, recognising, as did Leigh Hunt, that Hogg had "a good heart as well as wit." Hogg told him how Shelley was so absorbed in *Gebir* one day at Oxford that Hogg, vainly attempting to win his attention for something else, snatched the book and flung it impatiently out of the window, but no sooner was it retrieved by a servant, than Shelley became again absorbed in it. Landor laughed "his hearty, cordial, genial laugh," saying, "Well, you must allow it is something to have produced what could please one fellow-creature, and offend another, so much." Conceiving a great admiration for Landor, Hogg deeply regretted that he and Shelley never met, for he said, "if I could confer a real benefit upon a friend, I would procure for him, if it were possible, the friendship of Walter Savage Landor."

§ 5

In the new year of 1826 Francis Hare persuaded Landor to accompany him to Rome. He spent each day "from nine til five, in looking at the antiquities and the churches," and he found Rome "certainly the finest city in the world, exclusive of

the antiquities." He lived in only one room and received no visitors, but he was invited to "meet every evening the best and most splendid society in the place." Among others, he met the genial wit, gossip, and lover of good living, Sir William Gell, the scholarly and witty ambassador, Sir William Drummond, and the ninth Lord Ward, soon to be Earl of Dudley and British Foreign Secretary. These three were men whose conversation, scholarship, and judgment he valued as highly as Francis Hare's. All four were dead when he wrote:

> Gell, Drummond, Hare, and wise and witty Ward
> Knew at first sight and sound the genuine bard.

And when Dickens was visiting Italy in 1844 and he recalled with home-sickness his old pleasure there, some evening at Rome was in his mind when writing,

> I miss the tales I used to tell
> With cordial Hare and joyous Gell.

But, though such happy evenings were to linger in his memory, at the time he was also home-sick, "for I think incessantly of Arnold, and of the greek he is learning, many sentences of which he speaks correctly," and he wrote to his mother on 8th February:

> All the wonders of Rome do not console me for the absence of Arnold and Julia; and, tho I promised to remain here three weeks, I shall return within the fortnight. This is the first time in my life that I have ever been twelve hours without seeing Arnold, and he is now eight years old within a month. He has written me a letter, which came together with yours, and which I must not lose a post in answering.

Forty years later, among his papers Forster found the childish note to "My dearest Papa," and Landor's reply:

> My dearest Arnold, I received your letter today, much too late to answer it by the post; but you will see that I was thinking of you and Julia yesterday by the verses I send you on the other side.

I am very much pleased to observe that you write better than I do; and if you continue to read the Greek nouns, you will very soon know more Greek, unless I begin again to study it every day. When I was a little boy I did not let any one get before me; and you seem as if you would do the same. I promised you a Greek book, but I will give you two if you go on well, and next year two others, very beautiful and entertaining. I shall never be quite happy until I see you again and put my cheek upon your head. Tell my sweet Julia that, if I see twenty little girls, I will not romp with any of them before I romp with her; and kiss your two dear brothers for me. You must always love them as much as I love you, and you must teach them how to be good boys, which I cannot do as well as you can. God preserve and bless you, my own Arnold. My heart beats as if it would fly to you, my own fierce creature. We shall very soon meet. Love your Babbo.

The relations between parent and child reflected in this letter contrast strikingly, not only with Landor's own Spartan upbringing, by which the strong brought themselves up while the weaker went to the wall, but also from the system of disciplined propriety then coming into vogue, under which children were expected to be seen and not heard, to address their parents as "Sir" and "Ma'am", and passed from the care of servants to school-teachers. Apart from the wealth of parental tenderness, there is rare understanding in that letter—no suspicion of condescension, such as embarrasses and alienates a child, a man-to-man sort of encouragement, and a subtle flattery in recognising the boy's power over his juniors. Only the one sentence, bursting from Landor's heart, would seem a little "silly" to the boy, whose cheeks burned when he read his description as his father's "own fierce creature." It was only Papa's odd way, he would reflect. But other things would soon be set down to Papa's oddity, and when he had heard his mother speak in angry contempt of eccentricity, there would always be this shameful quality about his father, to be evaded with embarrassment, to be deprecated and deplored.

The visit to Rome was important to Landor. His welcome by men like Gell and Drummond made him realise that, at last,



WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR, AGED 51

By William Bewick—"Done at Florence Sep^r 12, 1826"

he was recognised as a man of genius and great achievement. No longer was he a sad case of wasted gifts, disappointing those, like Parr, who loyally believed in him. The bogey of failure no longer lurked behind his shoulder; he was received at his own valuation—as an intellectual Titan. The old brooding hostility, in eyeing each new acquaintance as if expectant of an affront, fell from him like a discarded cloak. From his accepted eminence, he could afford to be gracious, and so the charming courtesy, such as formerly only men he esteemed, like Lord Dillon, could evoke, now became his natural demeanour. He still remained difficult of access at home, for he cherished his solitude for study, but he no longer disdained the pleasures of society.

On 1st December 1826 he wrote to his mother:

> We are very gay here at Florence. Last night we were at a private play, given by Lord Normanby. He and Lady Normanby act admirably. Arnold was very much flattered by being invited, and the more as he was the only one of his age who received an invitation. . . . Julia is less proud, tho the Duchess of Hamilton gave her a thousand kisses and played to her on the pianoforte an hour together. They are both in excellent health—I wish I could say as much for the infant who has been christened by the name of Charles, after my grandfather. Last night is the only one that Julia has left him a single hour for three months. He continues to suffer extremely by his teeth, four of which are cutting at once. . . . Walter is troubled with chilblains. . . . I have improved my digestion by the use of cayenne pepper and never was so little bilious these last twelve years.

With his liver in order, with people liked and respected eager for his company, with his genius generally recognised, with his children at an age to bring him delight unmixed with pain, life for Landor was at its brightest. Francis Hare proposed that he should reprint his poems. *Gebir* and *Count Julian* were obtainable only by the researches of second-hand booksellers, *Simonidea* had never circulated beyond a few friends; now was the time, in the first flush of his fame as a prose-writer, to establish himself as a poet. He dated the dedication of the proposed vol-

ume to Francis Hare on 1st January 1827, though another four years were to elapse before its publication.

Though he now began to enjoy social gatherings at which he was one of the principal figures to be pointed out with whispering fingers, he still remained a difficult capture for hostesses. Marguerite, Countess of Blessington, not yet celebrated as the bluestocking hostess of Gore House, but already "gorgeous" in the wealth of her husband and the flower of her stately beauty, spent the spring of 1826 at Florence without meeting Landor, though she was on terms of friendly intimacy with Francis Hare, Lords Dillon, Guilford, and Normanby, and other friends of Landor's. It was in June 1827 that she recorded in her journal:

> Made the acquaintance of Walter Savage Landor, ten days ago, and have seen him nearly every day since. There are some people, and he is of those, whom one cannot designate as "Mr." I should as soon think of adding the word to his name as, in talking of some of the great writers of old, to prefix it to theirs. Of Walter Savage Landor's genius, his "Imaginary Conversations" had, previously to our meeting, left me in no doubt: of the elevation of his mind, the nobleness of his thoughts, and the manly tenderness which is a peculiar attribute of superior men, and strongly characterises him, I had learned to form a just estimate; but the high breeding and urbanity of his manners, which are very striking, I had not been taught to expect; for those who spoke of him to me, although sincere admirers of his, had not named them. His avoidance of general society, though courted to enter it, his dignified reserve when brought in contact with those he disapproves, and his fearless courage in following the dictates of a lofty mind, had somehow or other given the erroneous impression that his manners were, if not somewhat abrupt, at least singular. This is not the case, or, if it be, the only singularity I can discern is a more than ordinary politeness towards women—a singularity that I heartily wish was one no longer. The politeness of Landor has nothing of the troublesome officiousness of a *petit-maître*, nor the oppressive ceremoniousness of a fine gentleman of *l'ancien régime;* it is grave and respectful, without his ever losing sight of what is due to himself, when most assiduously practising the urbanity due to others. There is a natural dignity which appertains to him that suits perfectly with the style of his conversation and his general appearance. His

head is one of the most intellectual ones imaginable, and would serve as a good illustration in support of the theories of phrenologists. The forehead broad and prominent; the mental organs largely developed; the eyes quick and intelligent; and the mouth full of benevolence. The first glance at Landor satisfies one that he can be no ordinary person; and his remarks convince one of the originality of his mind, and the deep stores of erudition treasured in it. It is not often that a man, so profoundly erudite as Landor, preserves this racy originality, which . . . gives a colour to all that he has acquired. He reads of the ancients, thinks, lives with, and dreams of them; has imbued his thoughts with their lofty aspirations, and noble contempt of what is unworthy; and yet retains the peculiarities that distinguish him from them, as well as from the common herd of men. These peculiarities consist in a fearless and uncompromising expression of his thoughts, incompatible with a mundane policy; the practice of a profuse generosity towards the unfortunate; a simplicity in his own mode of life, in which the indulgence of selfish gratifications is rigidly excluded; and a sternness of mind, and a tenderness of heart, that would lead him to brave a tyrant on his throne, or to soothe a wailing infant with a woman's softness. These are the characteristics of Walter Savage Landor, who may justly be considered one of the most admirable writers of his day, as well as one of the most remarkable and original men.

Much of this extract was doubtless written when the journal was published as *The Idler in Italy* in 1839, after twelve years of friendship. But it presents a full and faithful sketch of Landor in his first years of fame, endorsed in details by more fragmentary testimonies, and it possesses the additional advantage of coming from an accomplished woman of the world, who maintained with him a disinterested friendship to the end of her life.

Seven years younger than Landor, Lord Mountjoy, apparently for no better reason than his possession of great wealth, had been created Earl of Blessington in 1816, two years before he married the beautiful and gifted Marguerite as his second wife. The widow of an army officer, she had been the kept mistress of a hard-drinking Hampshire squire before Blessington married her, and in spite of her beauty and her husband's

wealth, she was not received in the most exclusive London society. For the past six years they had travelled about the continent, attended by a retinue so expensive and extensive that it was called "the Blessington Circus," and accompanied everywhere as their inseparable companion—so adding scandal to the Countess's name—by the handsome young dandy, Count Alfred D'Orsay.

Aware that her reputation and her husband's eccentricity must thwart her ambitions as a political hostess, Lady Blessington developed designs on the less censorious world of letters. She published three books, she pursued Byron's acquaintance at Genoa, gathering materials for her *Conversations of Lord Byron*, she knew men like Gell and Hare and Drummond. Francis Hare was staying with the Blessingtons when he heard that Landor was laid up with quinsy, and made his excuses to go and see his friend. Blessington knew it would please his wife to add this latest literary lion to her acquaintance, and called on Landor. When his card was brought in, Landor was denying all knowledge of him, but Blessington followed in behind the servant, saying, "Come, come, Landor! I never thought you would refuse to see an old friend. If you don't know Blessington, you may remember Mountjoy."

Landor afterwards confessed that he did not remember Mountjoy, but he was glad to recall old times with Lady Belmore at Bath, and he liked the genial Irishman, who was so ready to be friendly. "In a few days he brought his lady 'to see me and make me well again.' " It was not remarkable that Landor was immediately captivated by Lady Blessington's charm; half the men of letters in London were so during the next decade. To his mother he wrote:

> Lady Blessington is, without any exception, the most elegant and best-informed woman I ever conversed with; but, as she is accused of some incorrectness in early life, the ladies (at least the English ladies) do not visit her. In France she enjoys the first society, and admits *only* the first. Never was there a woman more generous or more high minded.

Nor was it remarkable that he liked D'Orsay, on whose death twenty-five years later he wrote:

> With many foibles and grave faults he was generous and sincere. Neither spirits nor wit ever failed him, and he was ready at all times to lay down his life for a friend.

But, of all their acquaintance, Landor seems to have been the only one to appreciate Lord Blessington, as his wife appreciated him. Blessington's first wife was his mistress before marriage; his second he was said to have purchased from her keeper; he was now esteemed complacent in cuckoldry by D'Orsay. Inheriting vast wealth at an early age, he had never attempted any ambition; though prodigally extravagant, he had never achieved any reputation even for vice. He was generally reckoned a harmless, eccentric spendthrift, rather pitiably uxorious, and a little weak in the head. Most people laughed at his indignation at the state of his native Ireland, pointing derisively to his own mode of life when he advocated that the nobility and gentry should be made to "live on their estates or sell them." But Landor appreciated that he did much private good, while fervently believing in liberal ideas. "We thought differently on many points," wrote Landor on Blessington's death, "particularly on the political abilities and integrity of Canning," but "our opposition in sentiment did not alter or diminish our mutual esteem." Blessington died in 1829, and on receiving Landor's letter of condolence Lady Blessington begged him to write again—"It will be a pleasure to me to hear from you, as, independent of my own feelings of friendship for you, I well know that there was no man breathing for whom my ever to be lamented husband entertained a higher opinion or felt a warmer regard."

From the first, Landor fell into close intimacy with these new friends. To his sister Ellen he wrote in July from the Villa Castiglione:

> "I am always at the Blessingtons' from eight to eleven, I mean

when I am in Florence. At present I do not go over to them more than once or twice a week, the distance being three good miles."

In the same letter, he recorded "a very pressing invitation from Lord Blessington to accompany him in his yacht to Naples." The previous winter he had been flattered by an invitation from Lord Guilford, to whom he dedicated the fifth volume of *Conversations*, "to visit him in the Ionian Islands." Devoted to the cause for which Byron died, Guilford had established a university at Corfu. Perhaps Landor was unduly flattered by the invitation, for, remarking that "never was mortal man so devoted to one pursuit, as this estimable creature is to the restoration of literature in Greece," Lady Blessington regarded a similar invitation as "not so much, I verily believe, for the sake of our society, as for the purpose of showing us his literary establishments." Landor, however, declined Guilford's invitation, saying "I do not think I shall ever move farther than a morning's walk from the table where I am writing."

But Blessington's offer tempted him. "As I have never seen Naples," he wrote to his sister, "and never could see it to such advantage, as in the company of a most delightful well-informed man, and as four hundred a year do not afford all the facilities and *agréments* of forty thousand, you may be assured I was not very reluctant to accompany him." Arnold had been ill of a fever, and Landor waited to be satisfied of his convalescence before sailing. He was to be away for twenty-five days. Afterwards he recorded his impressions of the beauties of Naples—La Cava "one of the most beautiful places in the world," the ruins of the temples magnificent, though "Grecian architecture does not turn into ruins so grandly as gothic"—adding, to shock his sister as in his old days as a mad Jacobin, "York cathedral, a thousand years hence, when the Americans have conquered and devastated the Country, will be more striking." But he had little time to see many sights.

No sooner had he arrived, than he fell into an agony of anxiety on finding no letter from Arnold.

Not receiving any letter at Naples, I was almost mad, for I fancied his illness had returned. I hesitated between drowning myself and going post back. At last I took a place—the only one, for one only is allowed—with the post man in what is called the diligence. Meanwhile Lord Blessington told me he would instantly set sail, if I wished it, and that I could go quicker by sea. I did so, and we arrived in four days at Leghorn.

There he gave me a note, enclosed in a letter to him, informing me that Julia had been in danger of her life, but was now better. I found her quite unable to speak coherently, and unhappily she was in the country. Nevertheless the physician, who sometimes passed the whole day with her, and once slept at the house, never omitted for forty three days to visit her twice a day. . . . The complaint was a malignant fever of the very worst kind. She took three emetics in one day, and in the first two of her illness she was bled twice in the arm, and in the succeeding days with leeches. Besides all these tortures, she had mustard, and God knows what, applied to her feet and legs. All this began the day after I left Florence for Naples.

Charles, the youngest child, caught the infection from his mother, but, although "for three days it was thought he had no chance of his life, he made a rapid recovery in sixteen days." Little Julia and Walter were saved from infection by Lady Blessington, who drove out from Florence and took them home with her. Towards the end of September, his wife was well enough to be moved to the city; Landor "brought her part of the way by means of oxen on the sledge, and upon two mattresses." On 1st October, when she had "begun to take a new preparation of bark, and can walk about the room," the physician attended her for the last time, and Landor wrote to his sister Elizabeth:

These afflictions have turned the rest of my hair white, after taking off what was refractory and would not turn. However it has left me strength and spirits better than ever. No man was ever so near to losing three of his family without at last losing one.

The Blessingtons were the main source of his good spirits. He was, as long afterwards he told Mrs. Story, "quite the *ami*

de la maison." They remained at Florence till November, when they visited Rome, and returning in the spring, continued at Florence till the late autumn of 1828. Landor said he went "every evening from my villa and spent it in their society," and Lady Blessington noted in her journal:

> The shades of night send us home to enjoy iced tea and sorbetti in our charming pavilion overlooking the Arno, where a few friends assemble every evening. Walter Savage Landor seldom misses this accustomed visit, and his *real* conversations are quite as delightful as his imaginary ones. In listening to the elevated sentiments and fine observations of this eloquent man, the mind is carried back to other times; and one could fancy oneself attending to the converse of a philosopher of antiquity, instead of that of an individual of the nineteenth century; though, to be sure, one of the most remarkable persons of this, or any age.

At the Blessingtons' he met Henry Hallam, the historian, William Richard Hamilton, formerly British minister at Naples, and the Duc de Richelieu, whose acquaintance inspired him to write the amusing narrative conversation between "Richelieu, Sir Firebrace Cotes, Lady Grengrin, and Mr. Normanby," which may be suspected of supplying a model to George Moore. He wrote to his sister in November:

> I never met with a graver or sounder man than the Count di Canaldoli, who was minister to the King of Naples in the time of the Constitution. In these last six weeks I have seen him most evenings, and conversed with him the greater part of them, unless when his daughters sang, which they do divinely.

He also met D'Orsay's sister, the lovely Duchesse de Guiche, "retaining a part of her bloom and all her graces," and Blessington's daughter, Lady Harriet Gardiner, of whom he afterwards said that he could not promise much, "if you converse with her more than once."

Lady Harriet's wedding to D'Orsay was the cause of the Blessingtons' departure from Florence to Rome in November. The licence of the British minister had to be obtained, and Lord

Burghersh, believing the popular scandal about D'Orsay and Lady Blessington, was accordingly revolted by the proposed marriage, used every available obstacle to prevent the ceremony, and finally spoke his mind in undiplomatic language to both Lady Blessington and stepdaughter. Landor never believed that Lady Blessington was D'Orsay's mistress—"I disbelieve in the tales of her last friendship," he announced in a public letter after her death, and "No truth at all about D'Orsay and Lady B. All a complete lie," he told Mrs. Story—and his old indignation against Burghersh was fanned into flame by this affront to his friends. He accordingly wrote to Lady Blessington:

> I believe I may have said on other occasions that nothing could surprise me, of folly or indecorum in Lord Burghersh. I must retract my words: the only ones he will ever make me retract. That a man educated among the sons of gentlemen could be guilty of such incivility to two ladies, to say nothing of condition, nothing of person, nothing of acquaintance and past courtesies, is inconceivable, even to the most observant of his behaviour throughout the whole period of his public life. From what I have heard and known during a residence of six years at Florence, I am convinced that all the ministers of all the other Courts in Europe (I may throw in those of Asia and Africa) have never been guilty of so many unbecoming and disgraceful actions as this man. . . .

He went on to urge the necessity of representing Burghersh's conduct in this matter "to the Administration at home; without which it cannot fail to be misinterpreted here, whatever care and anxiety the friends of your family may display, in setting right the erroneous and malicious." Lady Blessington's reply is not recorded. D'Orsay wrote to Landor from Rome, saying he hoped that Burghersh would take offence at a letter he had written to him, as it would give him great pleasure to cut off the end of his snout. But no official complaint such as Landor suggested appears to have been lodged, and accordingly popular opinion decided that Burghersh had just cause for indignation. But not so Landor, who never failed in loyalty to a friend.

CHAPTER VIII

FIESOLE AND ENGLISH VISIT

§ 1

TAKEN AWAY FROM TAYLOR, the second edition of the first two volumes of *Imaginary Conversations* was published by Henry Colburn in 1826. The third volume, however, was set up in type nearly two years before its publication by Colburn in the spring of 1828. Long before then, urged by Francis Hare to bring up the number of dialogues to a hundred, Landor had finished two more volumes. "Whether they will ever be printed I know not, and never will inquire," he informed Southey; "this is left with Julius Hare."

Ten years later Harrison Ainsworth described Colburn as "a sad shuffling fellow," and so he seems to have proved in connection with Landor's work. He was the most successful publisher in London before Richard Bentley—caricatured as Mr. Bungay in Thackeray's *Pendennis*, as was Colburn as Mr. Bacon—started in business for himself, and while he published mainly novels and memoirs assured by commercial success, he was reluctant to lose the credit of publishing a work of literary merit, but limited sale. At the same time, he disliked losing money; he had none of the true publishing philosophy which recognises that to maintain a first-rate reputation, best-sellers of a season must sustain the losses on literary works of limited appeal. Lacking literary judgment of his own, he was loth to trust that of others. Colburn's hesitancy exasperated the patience of Julius Hare, who took the fourth and fifth volumes to young Harrison Ains-

worth, not yet a novelist, and just fluttering his wings in a short-lived flight as a publisher.

Landor reported progress to his sister Ellen on 18th November 1827:

> I heard yesterday, for the first time, that the three last volumes of my Conversations are printed or printing, and will come out early in the ensuing year. The third Vol. has indeed been printed these ten or eleven months, but Colburn has been *persuaded* to delay, and if possible to prevent, its publication. Another publisher has undertaken the fourth and fifth. I am sick of writing. Never will I write any thing more. I have burnt all the things I had begun, and many that I had nearly completed. I was very much grieved to hear of poor Lord Guilford's death. I had dedicated the last volume to him; and the dedication shall hold its place, together with some words preceding it, regretting his loss and Parr's. . . .

In retort to a tentative suggestion that his publisher's hesitancy might spring from fear of trouble consequent upon his outspoken opinions, he wrote to his sisters on 4th February 1828:

> Southey and Hare have full power to erase whatever they think proper to erase from my Imaginary Conversations. At present, so far as I know, they have exerted their authority over only two paragraphs, which they thought *actionable*. As for the rest, they would, as they will tell you, as soon think of cancelling a scene of Shakespear. Doctor Wade and Doctor Innes would be braver. . . .

In spite of his occasional fits of distaste for writing, he continued to send Hare more dialogues. Soon Ainsworth became alarmed at the increasing bulk of the proposed volumes, and Hare agreed that the fifth should be split into two, making six volumes in all. The fourth and fifth volumes were in type when the volatile Ainsworth decided to give up publishing, and transferred his business to his father-in-law, John Ebers. Having been lately bankrupt, Ebers had no fancy for publishing a book doubtful of profit, and Julius Hare again began his wearisome hawking of the volumes. "The *Conversations* are too classical and substantial for the morbid and frivolous taste of the English

public," he wrote to Landor, "and few publishers, except my friend Taylor, look beyond the saleableness of a work." Not till July 1829 did he succeed in finding a publisher for the fourth and fifth volumes in James Duncan, who agreed to a profit-sharing basis. The sixth volume he failed to place at all; two conversations out of its proposed contents were published in 1832–33 in a Cambridge periodical, the *Philological Museum*, edited by Julius Hare, but some, like the "Marvel and Parker," waited for publication till 1846.

While he enjoyed the daily society of the Blessingtons, he continued his interests in art. He not only speculated in old pictures, but warmly welcomed artists visiting Florence. Before this period, the only surviving portrait of himself is that by Nathaniel Dance in 1804. But William Bewick, probably introduced by Hazlitt, painted him in September 1826; D'Orsay made a pencil sketch of him; John Gibson modelled a bust of him. In April 1828 Middleton had "half finished a most beautiful drawing of Arnold and Julia," which Landor sent to his mother, and Wallace painted a portrait of his wife and her two younger sons. His letters to his mother and sisters give vivid glimpses of his habits and interests.

To Elizabeth. 25 April (1828)

. . . Some friends of mine, I am told, are going to Lemington; one is Mrs. Dashwood, daughter to the late Dean of St. Asaph, the best man in England. If by chance you should see her, I hope you will make much of her! She is cousin to Francis Hare, my particular friend. I believe a Mrs. Young is with her. This lady is sister to Mrs. Ablett, from whom and her husband I and my family have received a thousand acts of Kindness. Ablett is the kindest and most generous man in existence, and particularly attached to me. . . . My children are all well, but Julia within these two days has begun to complain a little. I hope there is no danger of such an illness as that of last year. . . .

To Ellen. Florence June 19

Gibson came to me the very day Colonel Ackelon brought me Robert's poem, and I give him two sittings, one in the morning, one in the evening. There have been three days, and there will be

four more, before he takes the cast in plaster of Paris. I am told that Chantry is equal to him in busts, but very inferior in genius. The one is English upon principle, the other Attic.

On Sunday I redd Robert's Preface, which is well written. I shall not begin the poetry, til I can give it an undivided attention, which will be when I get into the country, and be under the vines all day.

I hope to begin this mode of life on the first of July. I am very much obliged to Henry for his kind offer of letting me have the legacy now. I do not want any money for myself, but shall be very happy to pay off *one hundred pounds.*

The mine of wealth derived from my Conversations brought me three hundred and seventy two pounds, the two Editions. One hundred & seventy two the first, 200 the second.

Mr Burrow Julia's unkle, lent me 400 £ before I left England, with which I paid my silversmiths bill. I have returned him only 100 £ and this from the last Edition. 68 £ more went in payment of what was given to Julia, but which I insisted should not be given. I laid out nearly 100 in pictures, part of which I sold again for 180, and the *better* part is left yet. If I had had 3,000 £ eight years ago, I could have cleared 12,000 in the first two years.

The dealers here know only the Florentine school, and one of them, the best and most honest, often asks my opinion even on this. I have put a few hundred pounds into his pocket.

To Elizabeth. Florence 12 July

I do not remember whether I am a letter in your debt, but suspect I may be. In a little while you will see Colonel Ackelon, who carries one for my mother. I saw but little of him; he appears a strange foolish creature. His daughter is a very amiable girl.

But of all the delightful and sensible girls I have seen for many years and indeed almost at any time, Miss Middleton is the most so. Her father has made a very beautiful picture of Arnold and Julia. . . . It is not unlikely that in another year I may remove to the borders of the Rhine, on account of the general badness of the climate in Italy. I should very much regret to leave Florence, where I have several friends, excellent and well-informed men, English you may suppose; for none such are to be found among the natives. The greatest loss after this would be the public library, and then the picture gallery. But the children cannot resist the heat, and I am in danger every summer of losing one or other of them. . . . My bust is finished, or rather the mould for it. Never

was anything in the world so perfectly like. Gibson is the sculptor; and I doubt whether any modern one excells him. . . .

To his Mother. Florence 19 Aug.

. . . The children and myself have all had the whooping cough, and have it stil, altho much more lightly. Nothing is absurder than that certain disorders can come only once. In the same country they may never return, but a new climate makes a new creature. Besides the whooping cough, we have all been covered with nettle rash, which I am sorry for, as I believe it to be an incurable disease, and likely to return every year. It has ruined the skin of my hands.

In this country a warm bath is requisite from the beginning of April to the middle of October. Without it there is no health or comfort.

I have received an invitation from Lord Blessington to stay with him at Paris, or rather with his family, and remain until he returns from England. This would delight me, if I could leave the children. . . .

To Ellen and Elizabeth. Florence 8 Dec.

. . . I hear from Rome that the cast for my bust is very much admired. Mr. Ablett has given me leave to have one taken for my mother and another for my wife. . . . This morning I met Sir Robert Lawley, who walked with me for half an hour, and made many inquiries about the family. He had taken it ill that I had declined two or three of his invitations to dinner parties; but I told him I never intended to be at one anywhere all the remainder of my life. . . . My friend Hare has married Miss Paul, the daughter of Sir John Paul, and has 20,000 £ with her. His brother Augustus writes me word that he follows the good example in the summer, and that Lady Jones gives him 400 £ a year. She is his aunt, and the widow of Sir William. Have you redd Southey's Vindicae Ecclesiae Anglicanae? He has sent it me; it contains the highest eulogy on me I ever received or ever shall. . . .

§ 2

Though Southey wisely suppressed such anecdotes as those about Prince Borghese and Russell in the "Puntomichino," as likely to get Landor into trouble locally, the first two volumes

of *Imaginary Conversations* made him markedly unpopular among the criticised Florentines. The third volume, with the derisive gibes in "Florentine, English Visitor, and Landor," so inflamed local indignation that the Florentine authorities eagerly awaited an excuse for vengeance. An opportunity arrived when Landor's house was burgled early in 1829. Conceiving that the police made little effort to bring the thieves to justice, he attributed, doubtless rightly, that their lethargy was inspired by his being the injured party, and he plainly expressed to them his uncomplimentary opinion of their administration of the law. The authorities seized upon these expressions as grounds for ordering his expulsion from Florence and demanding a withdrawal of his libellous remarks. To his sister Ellen he related the sequel on 23rd July:

> The scoundrels here, who protected the robbers of my plate, wanted me to make an apology for the language I had used toward them. Instead of which I wrote instantly to the Granduke, who gave direct and positive orders for my recall, which these fellows kept back for several days, and I returned (to their great annoyance) before I received it. The original grudge was the note on Corsini selling his wife's old clothes before she had been dead a fortnight, and the character I had given of Florentine patriots, and Florentine justice.

Unknown to Landor, several influential friends, including Lord Normanby and Sir Robert Lawley, had interceded for him with the Grand Duke, who was persuaded to regard as amusing the sallies against Florentine oddities in the *Conversations*.

Any ideas he ever entertained of removal to the Rhine or elsewhere were now finally abandoned. Having heard of his narrow escape from expulsion, Francis Hare wrote in August from Cambridge, where he was staying with his brother Julius, reminding Landor of the good times they had enjoyed together at Florence, and begging him to avoid any fresh scrapes which might drive him out of the city, which he gave reasons for believing to be the most suitable of all places of residence for him. But Landor did not need Hare's persuasions. It was enough

for his pugnacious spirit that the Florentines wished to be rid of him; as he wrote to Southey:

> Such being the case, I resolved to pitch my tent in the midst of them; and have now bought a villa, belonging to the Count Gherardescha, of the family of C. Ugolino, and upon the spot where Boccaccio led his women to bathe when they had left the first scene of their story-telling. Here I shall pass my life, long or short, no matter; but God grant without pain and sickness, and with only such friends and such enemies as I enjoy at present.

He had neither the intention nor the money to buy a villa when he went house-hunting to Fiesole. The health of his wife and children required residence away from the summer heat of Florence, and his tenancy of the Villa Castiglione nearing expiry, he went to look at "a small cottage with about twelve acres of land," which was to let. But with him went a new and munificent friend, Joseph Ablett, yet another whose acquaintance he owed to Francis Hare. Ablett's sister-in-law was a close friend of Hare's cousin, Mrs. Dashwood, and coming to Florence early in the year, he had conceived an admiration for Landor personally equal to that already inspired by his work. He had an estate in North Wales, purchased with wealth acquired from Manchester trade, and cultivated a taste for the arts. After only a few months' acquaintance, he had prevailed upon Landor to allow him to make a present to his mother of a cast in marble of his bust by Gibson. He liked the cottage well enough, but "preferred another house very near it, with a much greater quantity of ground annexed." Landor tried to persuade him to become his neighbour.

> He said little at the time, beyond the pleasure he should have in seeing me so pleasantly situated: but he made inquiries about the price of the larger house, and heard that it was not to be let, but that it might be bought for about two thousand pounds. He first desired me to buy it for him: then to keep it for myself: then to repay him the money whenever I was rich enough—and if I never was, to leave it for my heirs to settle. In fact, he refuses even a farthing of interest. All this was done by a man with whom I had

not been more than a few months acquainted. It is true his fortune is very large; but if others equal him in fortune, no human being ever equalled him in generosity.

Thirteen years later, Ablett was repaid his two thousand pounds out of a sum raised by a mortgage on Ipsley; he never accepted any interest.

Landor entered upon possession of the Villa Gherardescha in the autumn of 1829. In mid October he wrote to his sister Ellen: "I am living in the country, where I intend to pass the remainder of my life." His letter was in reply to one from Ellen, acknowledging receipt of Ablett's gift of the bust by Gibson and conveying disquieting news of their mother's health. "Your letter would have given me the greatest pain, if you had not consoled me with the idea that my mother's disorder is but weakness," he wrote. "At her age we cannot expect any great renovation of strength, but God grant her many days yet of health and happiness." As he wrote, the old lady was already dead, for she died on 8th October, within a month of her eighty-sixth birthday. Her pride forbade expression of sentiment, but during the past five years she had repeatedly dropped apparently careless hints at the possibility of his visiting England. She would gladly have sacrificed her eldest son's accession to fame for a single sight of him and his children. With wry irony Landor must have been reminded of his exasperation in boyhood at being "put down" by his family, when he found his mother little impressed by his fame. When she heard of the publication of *Imaginary Conversations*, she wrote to him, "For God's sake do not hurt your eyes, nor rack your brains too much, to amuse the world by writing: but take care of your health, which will be of greater consequence to your family." Later, she "heard your late publication highly spoken of by many; but as I am no judge, I shall say nothing relating to it. I wish you to take care of your eyes and health, and let the world go on as it has done." Having shed this chill douche, so characteristic of old age's distaste for subversive protest, upon Landor's ceaseless burning against established institutions, she

added with philosophic truth, "I think of the fate of Lord Byron, and that those who have the greatest abilities have the greatest misfortunes—because they have, more than others, mortifications and disappointments."

In spite of her age, his mother's death came as a shock to Landor. Though he talked of being settled forever in Italy, he had not realised that he would never see his mother again. He wrote to his sister Elisabeth:

Tho' Ellen's letter gave me much uneasiness, yet I did not apprehend at present the sad loss we have all sustained. My mother's great kindness to me, throughout the whole course of her life, made me perpetually think of her with the tenderest love. I thank God that she did not suffer either a painful or a long illness, and that she departed from life quite sensible of the affectionate care she had received from both her daughters. I am not sorry that she left me some token of her regard; but she gave me too many in her lifetime for me to think of taking any. You and Ellen will retain, for my sake, the urn and the books. I wish to have her little silver seal in exchange for an oriental cornelian, which you and my brothers gave me, belonging to my father. I have his arms, which is enough. The one I mean is pretty in its setting, and contains the word "Leitas" in persian letters. My brother Henry was so kind as to purchase two Venetian paintings, once mine and to place them at Ipsley. I thanked him at the time and thank him again; but I am resolved to accept nothing whatever from any of my relatives. If my mother's picture was purchased at Lantony, I would buy it gladly. Pray let me hear about it. I remember it at my grandmother's fifty years ago. Adieu. I am ill-disposed for writing more. Yours affectionately, W.L.

Though he knew that his mother's personal fortune was left among her younger children, he conceived that his inheritance of the entailed Ipsley estate would again raise him to affluence. By declining to benefit by his mother's death, he genuinely believed that he was abjuring wealth when he wrote to his cousin and agent:

I propose that my net income be divided into three equal portions; two for my Creditors, and one for my family.

Revd. Mr. Burrow of Bampton near Witney, my wife's Uncle,

lent me 400 £ and he should be paid first. Perhaps you might propose to pay him 100 £ half yearly, beginning at the next rent day. Jones, and the person from whom Gabell borrowed for me, should be paid in equal proportions and equal degrees.

You will remember that I lose my right to the inclosure unless it is carried into effect within 20 years. This is in the Agreement, any kind of Inclosure will preserve my rights, but I would gladly see 100 £ laid out as soon as possible in this and planting, particularly near as possible to the Abergavenny road, for exporting the timber.

Neither in this nor anything else do I consult my own interest, but my Son's. Ipsley Court will, of course, be lett, together with the Manor &c.

I shall never see it again.

Hare has lent me this month another hundred pounds. If it is not inconvenient to give him a Draft payable to Drummond at 3 months after date, and dating it the first of January, I should be glad. I owe him one hundred and six pounds nine shillings for he sent me the value of the odd money in books.

The only other debt I have here is my grocers: It will be about 40 £ by Christmas.

Receiving this letter, Walter Landor of Rugeley wrote on 16th November to Landor's brother Henry:

Wr. evidently knows little of the income he proposed to divide, & would find it difficult to manage with one third of it. I doubt the sum from Lanthony will be very trifling, indeed none if times do not quickly improve.

Advised by Henry, Landor's cousin paid him six to seven hundred a year, reserved several hundred annually for estate expenses, and continued to pay only the interest on the principal debts. For five years, however, Landor believed that he was sacrificing two-thirds of his income to his creditors.

The shock of his mother's death was softened by the almost simultaneous resurrection of former happiness—the re-appearance in his life of Ianthe. Telling his sister Ellen in October that he was dividing most of his time between two or three families of friends, he wrote:

You may well image that I divide it somewhat unequally when you know, unless you have first seen it in the papers, that the Countess de Molandé is come to Florence.

Perhaps tho you may never have heard that the dearest of all the friends I ever had or ever shall have, Mrs. Swift, accepted the Count de Molandé for her second husband. He died about two years ago, and the succession was disputed by many, but the only two anything like competitors were the Earl of Bective and the Duc de Luxembourg. The first, tho the younger and the handsomer man, was rejected, because the Countess thought that a woman who had sons & daughters grown up, never should contract a second marriage, much less a third. The same reason was given to the Duke; but he has shown such constancy, such resolution both against his relations and the King averse to the match from her being a protestant, that she has told him it would be better for both parties to be absent from each other for one winter, and to consider the matter a little more calmly. She has given him *no* promise: he has sworn to her that, if *ever* she will accept him, he is her husband. I have advised her to accept him, as adding a fresh splendour to her lovely daughters, and very sure to conduce to their more desirable establishment in life. Her fortune, from several relations, is become very large, and she has no ambition. I doubt whether she will do what I think most advisable.

Probably he was well pleased that this charming widow in her late forties disregarded his advice. He had reason to congratulate himself that she would have more willingly resigned widowhood if he had been free to be her suitor, for when one of her daughters married in the following year he wrote:

> Maria! I have said *adieu*
> To one alone so fair as you;
> And she, beyond my hopes, at last
> Returns and tells me of the past;
> While happier for remembering well
> Am I to hear and she to tell.

And he added, as his advice to insure the girl's happiness in her married life,

> Remember one command of mine:
> Love with as steddy love as e'er
> Illumed the only breast so fair.

So, after twenty years, sentimental romance re-entered Landor's life to render idyllic his first months at Fiesole. Her son relates how Landor came every second day to breakfast at Ianthe's, while her family dined occasionally at Fiesole. "Reciprocal entertainments were of the most hilarious and delightful character;" Ianthe's children by her second marriage were of an age with Landor's eldest, and his fun must have been at its most boisterous in seeing his own adored children laughing with those of the woman he loved. "With Landor for our cicerone," Ianthe's family found Florence "extremely gay"; they visited the amateur theatricals of Lord Normanby, "who delighted in Landor," and it appears that Ianthe's company tempted Landor not only to the "Granduke's" balls, but even to the opera ball of the loathly Burghersh. Ianthe, too, shared his now absorbing hobby of planning the garden at his villa. To his sisters, who sent him mulberries and grass seed—his worst failure in his efforts to create a garden like that of his Warwick home was the raising of turf—in exchange for the rich fruits of Fiesole, he wrote that "I have four mimosas ready to place round my intended tomb, and a friend who is coming to plant them." This occasion inspired him to write his epitaph:

> Lo! where the four mimosas blend their shade,
> In calm repose at last is Landor laid;
> For ere he slept he saw them planted here
> By her his soul had ever held most dear,
> And he had lived enough when he had dried her tear.

Ianthe revived his mood for poetry. His dialogues were laid aside; his literary occupation was the collecting and revising of his verse for the representative volume suggested by Francis Hare. Hare had brought his bride to Florence, and theirs was the house most frequented by Landor after Ianthe's. John Kenyon, who had first come to him in 1827, bearing an introduction and a parcel of books from Southey and Wordsworth, was one of him earliest guests at Fiesole. Nine years younger than Landor, Kenyon had both wealth and generosity like Ablett's.

He had written enough verse of sufficient merit to be accepted for his literary pretensions, and his wealth and good nature won him great popularity as a host and patron of literary men. The oldest of his literary friends, Southey justly said of him that everybody liked him at first sight, and liked him better the longer he was known. Stout and hearty, he had "the face of a Benedictine monk, and the joyous talk of a good fellow." Perhaps he was not, like Hare or Southey or Armitage Brown, a friend to turn to in unhappiness or adversity; shrewdly Crabb Robinson remarked, "He is more bent on making the happy happier, than on making the unhappy less unhappy." He loved life in its richness—good food, fine wines, laughter, the company and conversation of men he liked and admired. He so delighted in entertaining at his table "every variety of literary notabilities" that he was called a "feeder of lions." He was an epicure, and as he studied how best to relish the flavour of a dainty and the bouquet of wine, so he sought to draw the best out of his friends. His pleasure was to give pleasure to others, to see them on good terms with themselves, and he delighted in Landor for his rich and spontaneous response. He had only to give Landor his head, to let him explode one of his furious tirades against stupidity or injustice, and then catch the infection of his uproarious laughter. Their friendship continued unabated for twenty-six years after this stay at Fiesole—till Kenyon's death in 1856; and when it had lasted sixteen years, one of their joyous meetings inspired some of Landor's better occasional verse:

> So, Kenyon, thou lover of frolic and laughter,
> We meet in a place where we never were sad.
> But who knows what destiny waits us hereafter,
> How little or much of the pleasures we had!
> The leaves of perhaps our last autumn are falling;
> Half-spent is the fire that may soon cease to burn;
> How many are absent who heed not our calling!
> Alas, and how many who can not return!

Henry Crabb Robinson, the diarist, a retired barrister and

journalist, who lived for the society of men of letters, also came to Fiesole with an introduction from Southey and Wordsworth. On 14th August 1830 he met "the one man living in Florence whom I was anxious to know." Sententiously he described Landor as "a man of unquestionable genius, but very questionable good sense; or rather, one of those unmanageable men—

> Blest with huge store of wit,
> Who want as much again to manage it.

He noted that he was shunned by the Italians, who said, "Everyone is afraid of him."

Yet he was respected universally. He had credit for generosity, as well as honesty; and he deserved it, provided an ample allowance was made for caprice. He was conscious of his own infirmity of temper, and told me he saw few persons, because he could not bear contradiction. Certainly, I frequently did contradict him; yet his attentions to me, both this and the following year, were unwearied.

Robinson liked himself not a little, and failed to appreciate that Landor's chivalrous loyalty demanded his utmost exertion for a friend of his beloved Southey, whatever he thought of Robinson personally. The diarist was, therefore, enabled to record, "To Landor's society I owed much of my highest enjoyment during my stay at Florence," adding:

He was a man of florid complexion, with large full eyes, and altogether a *leonine* man, and with a fierceness of tone well suited to his name; his decisions being confident, and on all subjects, whether of taste of life, unqualified; each standing for itself, not caring whether it was in harmony with what had gone before or would follow from the same oracular lips. But why should I trouble myself to describe him? He is painted by a master hand in Dickens's novel, Bleak House. . . .

Robinson, like Forster, was a blunt, straightforward man of the world, with more common sense than imagination; in Landor's

contempt for orthodoxy, for popular applause, for material honours and self-advancement, in his passionate loyalties and loathings, he saw no defiant consistency of self-fulfilment—only eccentricity. For Robinson, as for Forster, Landor was Boythorn. On his side, Landor liked Robinson well enough, though long afterwards he remembered how "Crabb Robinson bored me to death with his German talk."

> I said I hated the language, and he said that if I knew it and understood it I should be delighted with it. Goethe alone, he said, would repay me for the trouble of learning it. "His epigrams," says he, "you're fond of epigrams." I told him I didn't care a farthing for 'em. I said I knew many Latin and Greek ones—also many French ones that were better by far than either. He repeated to me one of Goethe's, saying it was wonderful. When he had finished I said "Where's the epigram?" "What, don't you see it?" says Crabb. "Well then, here's this one"; and he tried me with another. "I don't call *that* an epigram either," said I. "No? Good Lord, then I've done." "Thank God," said I.

In Robinson himself there was much of the humourless Teuton, which Landor thus delighted in baiting. But with a shrewdness unsuspected by Forster or Robinson, he accurately valued the latter's virtues, which he indicated with characteristic colour to a friend at Rome, when Robinson moved on to that city—"He was a barrister, and, notwithstanding, both honest and modest—a character I never heard of before: indeed, I have never met with one who was either."

§ 3

During his first three years at Fiesole, only two events occurred beyond Landor's domestic horizon. Early in 1831, his collected poems, as *Gebir, Count Julian, and Other Poems*, were published on commission by Edward Moxon, Julius Hare guaranteeing the expenses. The sales were small, and considering its author's reputation, the half-guinea volume attracted

singularly little attention. One discerning review, praising some of the lighter lyrics in preference to the more pretentious poems, appeared in the lately established *Fraser's Magazine*, whose redoubtable editor, the militant and much maligned Dr. Maginn, elected to take Landor under his protective wing. Whether or not Maginn wrote the whole review, he was certainly responsible for its last paragraph, declaring that Landor was not likely ever to become a popular poet, "but in whatever way a man of genius may please to pour forth the treasures of his mind, they should be received with reverence and gratitude," and such reception he would ever meet with from *Fraser*. Landor did not read reviews, and cared little about sales; he was glad to pay tribute to friendship in his dedication to Francis Hare, to give copies to his friends, and, above all, to lay at Ianthe's feet, in fuller measure, the devotion he had declared twenty-five years before in *Simonidea*.

The other event was reminiscent of Llanthony. A retired French diplomat named Antoir lived in a neighbouring cottage, which received its water supply by a stream overflowing from the fountains of the Villa Gherardescha. Owing to Landor's prodigal watering of his garden, there was often no overflow, and the stream dried up in summer. Antoir protested and, when Landor denied that he was stopping the flow of water, accused him of prevarication. Landor immediately challenged him, but the tact of Kirkup, who acted as his second, averted a duel. The grievance was then taken to court, where it ran a course almost comparable with Jarndyce, being finally settled in 1842, at a cost to Landor of between two and three hundred pounds.

Possessing his own property again, Landor revived his old zeal for planting. In two years he planted "200 cypresses, 600 vines, 400 roses, 200 arbutuses, and 70 bays," besides laurustinas and "60 fruit trees of the best qualities from France." He spent in improvements money formerly absorbed in house-rent—"about 75 £ a year." "I have not had a moment's illness since I resided here, nor have the children," he declared, and "I have the best water, the best air, and the best oil in the world." He

astonished his sisters with an invitation to visit him; if they came, they should have his best bedrooms, more beautiful than any in Warwick Castle, perfumed by the exotic flowers profusely growing under the windows.

Nobody would have laughed more boisterously at the notion of his elderly sisters' venturing their spinsterly decorum into the unknown jungle of continental travel. It seems that Landor's invitation was a bait; he foresaw the flutter they would be in, and that Elizabeth would emphasise how dear Ellen's delicate health utterly precluded the hazard of such a journey—if he wished to see them, dear Walter must come to Warwick. He wanted such a suggestion as an excuse to visit England. Ablett was repeatedly pressing him to visit North Wales, Robinson and Kenyon had assured him of a warm welcome in literary London, Lady Blessington was continually inviting him to stay with her in Paris or London. It was fourteen years since he had seen Southey; he had never yet met Wordsworth or Julius Hare. Recollections of old times and old faces had been revived by renewed friendliness with his father's friend, Sir Robert Lawley, now old and gouty, losing his sight, and lately raised to the peerage as Lord Wenlock. Above all, Ianthe had taken a house at Brighton.

On 7th February 1832 he fluttered his sisters with the announcement of his coming.

> I promised my dear Arnold to bring him with me, but his mother would not let him go. He was grieved at the disappointment but bore it heroically. Dear good divine creature! Poor Julietta cried and hung about me, and told me not to go away. If she had told me only once more, I could not have left her.

He tore himself away. He was fifty-seven; it was time for him to go, if he was to pay a final visit to his native country.

His idea of transport belonged to the grand manner before Waterloo; he "would not travel by any public conveyance, but purchased a horse and phaeton expressly to convey him across the Continent, and sold both at the French port of embarca-

tion." He "went safely thro France in the midst of the cholera, and reached Dieppe the very day after the steam vessel had departed for England." In consequence, he had to wait a whole week at Dieppe, "with nothing to see or read and nobody to converse with." After almost exactly eighteen years, he returned to England in the second week of May.

He went first to Brighton, where he "stayed two days with the Countess de Molandé and her family, in the midst of music, dancing, and fashionable people turned radicals." This amused him highly, and he gleefully recorded how Lady Bolingbroke told him that her husband would never enter the House of Lords again. From Brighton he went to London, where Ablett was waiting for him. He called on Crabb Robinson, dined with Lord Wenlock, and attended a *soirée* of the Duke of Sussex. Ablett then accompanied him for three days at Cambridge with Julius Hare; they then stayed a night with Landor's sisters at Warwick, before going on to Ablett's beautiful Denbighshire home, Llanbedr Hall. "Llanbedr is really in all respects the most delightful place I ever was in," he exclaimed to his sister Elizabeth, in a letter of 6th June enclosing the verses he wrote on Ablett's vacant tomb in Llanbedr churchyard: "Magnificent trees, the richest valley in the world and the most varied hills, with lofty mountains not too near nor too distant, but just as great folks should be." He was charmed by his host and hostess, who were "worthy one of the other," and they provided him with pleasant company, among others his friend Mrs. Dashwood and Lord Bagot, Ablett's neighbour at Pool Park.

In the second week of June, he went with Ablett to the Lakes. He was delighted to meet Southey again, but only his determination to be pleased prevented his feeling disappointment with Wordsworth. Himself always generous to his contemporaries, he noted with distaste Wordsworth's unwillingness to praise the work of others—"Wordsworth, well pleas'd with himself, cared little for modern or ancient," he afterwards wrote. Accustomed to store his own memory with the works of others, he was probably unfavourably impressed by Words-

worth's habit of reciting his own poetry, which, to Landor's high sense of intellectual dignity and scorn of advertisement, must have seemed the trick of a charlatan. He felt impatience, too, at Wordsworth's touchiness in taking to himself, after he had criticised the prose of *Imaginary Conversations* for an over-abundance of imagery, the apt retort that prose will bear a great deal more of poetry than poetry will bear of prose. The opinion of Wordsworth he had formed from his works was not enhanced by personal acquaintance with him, and it is significant that, when, at the end of the following year, he sent to Lady Blessington two separate odes to Southey and Wordsworth, personal affection and admiration rang clearly in his applause of Southey, while the tribute to Wordsworth's genius notably lacked any personal touch.

Ablett was reluctant to part from his friend, and on his return from the Lakes, Landor lingered at Llanbedr till late in July. He then stayed a week with his brother Charles at Colton, where he also encountered his cousin and agent, Walter Landor of Rugeley. On an excursion from Rugeley with his cousin to the upper Trent valley, Landor was moved by the beauty of the scenery to exclaim, "Why the deuce did not I buy this place and build my house here, instead of at that confounded Llanthony?" Drily his cousin replied that the scene he admired had been his property and that of his ancestors before him, but was part of the family estates sold by him after his father's death.

From Colton, he went to his sisters at Warwick, where his visit was enlivened by the presence of Kenyon and his wife at Leamington. He marvelled at Leamington's development as a fashionable watering place, for he remembered it as having "only two tenements that joined each other, and in the whole village only six or seven of any sort, besides the squire's, one Prew, who was the uncle of my grandmother." Everywhere he saw changes since he had left England; the penny post had yet to come, and railways were only in their infancy, but the industrial revolution was in full swing. The reform agitation was at

its height. In London he saw mobs "half mad about the King and the Tories." At Brighton, he was amused to see "fashionable people turned radicals"; when he found Southey and Wordsworth, those former apostles of republicanism, full of gloomy foreboding about the Reform Bill, he staunchly argued his liberal opinions against them. But Landor never had any fellowship with the popular herd; he was ever the champion of the oppressed, but when the "hydra-headed monster" reared itself in challenging triumph, he found his sympathies instinctively on the side of his own kind. He told Monckton Milnes the following year that his visit to England cured him of Radicalism and sent him back to Italy a Tory.

Landor did not visit Llanthony. The house was tenantless, and he instructed his cousin to pull it down and sell the building materials. "I never think of it without thinking of the ruin to which it has brought me," he told his sisters, "leaving me one of the poorest Englishmen in Florence, instead of one of the richest." On his way from Warwick to Bath, he accidentally met his brother Robert outside the posting inn at Evesham. This was their only meeting during Landor's visit, for though Robert promised to visit him at Bath, and Landor waited for him a day beyond his scheduled stay, he did not come. He had an attack of gout, which Landor curiously believed might bring about an improvement in his general health, assuring his sisters of his regret that "either this or any other incident has deprived me of the satisfaction I should have had in seeing him again."

From Bath he again visited Ianthe at Brighton, before staying a few days with his wife's family at Richmond and finally finishing his tour in London. On 24th September, Crabb Robinson took him to Flaxman's studio—"Landor was most extravagant in his praise." Four days later, he and Robinson visited Charles Lamb at Enfield. Lamb was on his best behaviour; Robinson thought him "by no means at his ease," and Mary Lamb was "quite silent," but Landor was delighted with both. He was eager to meet them, as objects of his latest admiration. At Florence, Robinson had lent him *Mrs. Leicester's School;* Landor

thanked him for "many hours of exquisite delight"—"Never have I read anything in prose so many times over, within so short a space of time, as 'The Father's Wedding-day.' " Richardson would have given his *Clarissa*, and Rousseau his *Héloïse*, to have imagined it, he said, and "if your Germans can show us anything comparable . . . I would almost undergo a year's gurgle of their language for it." Three years later, telling Lady Blessington how its pathos so affected him, that "I pressed my temples with both hands, and tears ran down to my elbows," he described the story as, "with the sole exception of the *Bride of Lammermoor*, the most beautiful tale in prose composition in any language." Her authorship of this story caused him to rate Mary Lamb equal in genius to her brother, and when he heard of Charles Lamb's death, writing to Robinson that "no thought took possession of my mind except the anguish of his sister," he composed the verses of tender sympathy which appeared in Leigh Hunt's *London Journal* for 13th June 1835, as an "attempt at consolation to the finest genius that ever descended on the heart of woman."

During the previous winter, Landor had been reading some of the Elia essays when he heard that the Lambs were suffering from ill-health. He wrote to Robinson that he felt "deep pain at this intelligence—pain certainly not disproportioned to the enjoyment I have received by their writings"—and asked if there was any chance of their visiting Italy, where he could "offer them fruits, flowers, horses," and which was a better country than England for those "out of health, or out of spirits." He and Robinson could stay only an hour at Enfield, and this was the only opportunity he ever had of meeting Lamb, but it was enough to provide a cherished memory. Lamb's death two years later grieved him "very bitterly"; "never did I see a human being with whom I was more inclined to sympathise," he said to Robinson, to whom he wrote because the recollection that he had met Lamb in Robinson's company affected him "greatly more than writing or speaking of him could do with any other."

Lamb was disposed to like Landor. Probably because the volume was published by his friend Moxon, he had been one of the scarce readers of Landor's poems the year before, when Robinson reported that "tipsy and sober he is ever muttering 'Rose Aylmer.' " But he forgot to tell Landor of his admiration at their meeting. Evidently they talked of Shakespeare—probably Landor mentioned his notion of introducing Shakespeare into an imaginary conversation—and Lamb gave him a copy of *Original Letters of Sir John Falstaff*, a book of fictional parodies by his friend James White. He also asked Landor to write a line in the album of his adopted daughter, Emma Isola. Landor never neglected such a request by, or on behalf of, the feminine sex, and Lamb was touched when he received an original poem of twelves lines for the girl's album. "I do not know how to thank you for attending to my request about the Album," he wrote with frank sincerity; "I thought you would never remember it." Perhaps he felt, as Robinson did, that he had not shown himself at his best advantage. "Many things I had to say to you, which there was not time for," he wrote.

> One why should I forget? 'tis for Rose Aylmer, which has a charm I cannot explain. I lived upon it for weeks. Next I forgot to tell you I knew all your Welch annoyancers, the measureless Beethams. I knew a quarter of a mile of them, 17 brothers and 16 sisters, as they appear to me in memory. . . . The shortest of the daughters measured 5 foot eleven without her shoes. Well, some day we may confer about them. . . .

With his letter he enclosed a copy of the *Last Essays of Elia*, and later lamented to Samuel Rogers, "It was a little tantalizing to me to receive a letter from Landor, *Gebir* Landor, from Florence, to say he was just sitting down to read my 'Elia,' just received, but the letter was to go out before the reading." He did not know Landor well enough to appreciate how, delighted to receive such a gift from one he so much admired, he must write immediately to express his pleasure and gratitude, or how he, so arrogant in insisting on his superiority to inferiors, paid

the tribute of such humility to his peers that he never thought of Lamb's possibly valuing his verdict on his work.

Crabb Robinson was not a sensitive observer. He conceived no suspicion of the mutual liking between Lamb and Landor, and seemed disappointed at the result of the meeting. He was better pleased when, on the following day, he took Landor to call on Coleridge at Highgate. Landor was "in the habit of considering Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Southey as three towers of one castle." Coleridge put on "a bran-new suit of black" for the occasion and made his visitor "as many fine speeches as he could ever have made to a pretty girl."

> He was horribly bent, and looked seventy years of age; nor did he talk with his usual force, though quite in his usual style. A great part of his conversation was a repetition of what I had heard him say before—an abuse of the Ministry for taking away his pension. . . . The stay was too short to allow of our entering upon literary matters. He spoke of Oriental poetry with contempt, and he showed his memory by alluding to Landor's juvenile poems. Landor and he seemed to like each other. Landor spoke in his dashing way, which Coleridge could understand.

With less than two years to live, Coleridge was a dim shade of "the damaged archangel" who had impressed all contemporaries as a creature of divine inspiration. When De Quincey called him "the largest and most spacious intellect, the subtlest and most comprehensive that has yet existed among men," Landor exclaimed, "Impiety to Shakespeare! treason to Milton!" though he allowed the rest. When Coleridge died, he referred to the previous deaths of Byron and Scott as "only the patterings of rain before the storm." Beside Coleridge, "Byron and Scott were but as gun-flints to a granite mountain," he wrote to Lady Blessington; "Wordsworth has one angle of resemblance; Southey has written more, and all well, much admirably." As for himself—"I sit upon the earth with my heels under me, looking up devoutly to this last glorious ascension"—and all other contemporaries were mere "ground ivy."

On the evening between the calls on Lamb and Coleridge,

Landor introduced Robinson to Lady Blessington, at whose house in Seamore Place he was staying. Since Blessington's death, they had maintained a regular correspondence; she especially esteemed Landor as "the highly valued friend of my dear and lamented husband," and while he was in the country, had written reproaching him for not having visited her in London—"you promised to stay a week, and that of that week I should have my share." He was now making his promised stay, and for introducing Robinson to his hostess he had another motive beyond returning courtesy for his introductions to Lamb and Coleridge. D'Orsay's young wife had left him, gossip attributed the separation to his adulterous relations with his wife's stepmother, and polite society ostracised Lady Blessington. Banished from fashionable life, she bravely set out to establish herself as a hostess to the less conventional literary world, and Landor introduced Robinson as one whose influence could be useful to her among men of letters. Loyally he did his best to predispose Robinson in her favour; "she was by far the most beautiful woman he ever saw," and he tactfully emphasised how "she was to Lord Blessington the most devoted wife he ever knew." Characteristic both of his chivalry to women and of his unreasoning loyalty to those he liked was his description of her to Robinson as "about thirty"—"I should have thought her older," noted Robinson drily, and she was, in fact, forty-three. When he returned to Italy he carried with him the gift of an engraving of Lady Blessington's portrait, "that it may sometimes remind you of the original," and they agreed that they would "by letters keep up our friendly intercourse," he telling her what he thought and felt in his Tuscan retirement, while she related her doings "in this modern Babylon, where thinking and feeling are almost unknown."

CHAPTER IX

DOMESTIC BREACH

§ 1

JULIUS HARE AND A CAMBRIDGE MAN named Worsley, who had visited Lamb with Landor and Robinson, accompanied Landor when he left England, crossing by steamer to Rotterdam, at the end of September 1832. Having travelled through Belgium and up the Rhine, Landor wrote to Robinson from Frankfort on 20th October of his meetings at Bonn with August Wilhelm von Schlegel and the patriot, Ernst Moritz Arndt. Schlegel he likened to "a little pot-bellied pony tricked out with stars, buckles and ribands, looking askance from his ring and halter in the market, for an apple from one, a morsel of bread from another, a fig of ginger from a third, and a pat from everybody." His meeting with "the honest Arndt" next day "settled the bile this coxcomb of the bazaar had excited." On Arndt's death in 1860 he wrote:

> Arndt! in thy orchard we shall meet no more
> To talk of freedom and of peace revived.
> We stood, and looking down across the Rhine
> Heard fifes and choral voices far below.

In the Tyrol, they were nearly snowed up at Innsbruck, where he talked with several who had known Andrew Hofer, whom he rated with Collingwood as "the two noblest characters of the present age." From one of these he heard the story of

Hofer's heroic death, which he related in a short notice included in *Literary Hours*, a symposium privately printed by Ablett in 1837. Passing through Venice, he reached Fiesole on 30th November.

Hare made a short stay with Landor before moving on to join his brother Francis and Monckton Milnes at Rome. Some changes had occurred in Landor's Florentine circle. Lord Dillon was lately dead, Leigh Hunt long since returned to England and soon editing his *London Journal*, in which appeared Landor's verses to Ablett and Mary Lamb, as well as a letter on "Language and Orthography," elaborating the views on spelling discussed in the imaginary conversation between Horne Tooke and Johnson. The detested Burghersh had departed, and Landor greatly liked the new minister, George Hamilton Seymour, "a very firm and sensible man," whose wife was "as beautiful and as good as an angel." Lord Normanby had also returned to England, but Lord Wenlock, very old and almost blind, came regularly to Florence, and "nothing can be more friendly," said Landor in 1833, "than he has always been to me."

Armitage Brown and Kirkup were as close friends as ever, while the ubiquitous Hares, Francis and Augustus, came frequently to Florence and kept up regular correspondence with Landor. Two new friends, whose friendship continued to the end of their lives, were William Sandford—"Sandford! the friend of all the brave"—and the novelist, G.P.R. James. A man of many homes, James seems to have made a habit of wintering at Florence for six or seven years after the publication of his most celebrated novel, *Richelieu*, in 1829. He was young enough to be Landor's son, and totally unlike him in character; singularly amiable, he quarrelled with nobody, he kept aloof from the literary world, and few seem to have penetrated his quiet, unassuming reserve of manner. The only apparent qualities he shared in common with Landor were a preference for country life, complete freedom from jealousy of his fellow writers, and a vast knowledge of history. Yet a sincere mutual

affection grew between them. "You cannot overvalue James," Landor wrote to Mary Boyle after knowing him nearly ten years; "there is not on God's earth (I like this expression, vulgar or not) any better creature of his hand." And to the same lady he wrote again, "Literary men in general are the vilest of the human race; happy we, who enjoy the friendship of one incomparably good and great in all his works, words, and thoughts." With his usual blind enthusiasm in friendship, he magnified James's talent and preferred his historical romances to Scott's. James was undemonstrative and reticent, but he delighted in Landor's company; "I stagnate when I do not see you," he exclaimed when inviting him to stay at the Hampshire home he had from 1837 to 1839. Landor was godfather to James's son born in 1832, and James dedicated to him his novel *Attila* in 1837.

A young clergyman named Hutton, introduced by Landor's sisters, became a regular guest at Fiesole in 1833; he was "everything that an English clergyman should be," and "very fond of the children, which alone would win my heart." A very different but equally welcome visitor was E. J. Trelawny, brought by Brown; Landor once described his *Adventures of a Younger Son* as "like nothing but the Iliad," and his amorous exploits evoked the doggerel:

> It is not every traveler
> Who like Trelawny can aver
> In every State he left behind
> An image the Nine Months may find.

In May 1833 came the certain assurance of celebrity as a literary lion—the visit of an American tourist. Ralph Waldo Emerson, obtaining an introduction through the American sculptor, Horatio Greenough, dined with Landor on 15th May. Like Lady Blessington, Emerson was pleasantly surprised on meeting him; from his books and anecdotes of gossip, he had derived "an impression of Achillean wrath—an untameable petulance," but he found that "his courtesy veiled that haughty

mind, and he was the most patient and gentle of hosts." Emerson noted that he was "decided in his opinions, likes to surprise, and is well content to impress, if possible, his English whim upon the immutable past." All his life Landor boldly asserted his opinions; he never lost the fiery spirit which flamed into indignation when tindered by injustice or stupidity, and the Brownings found him as implacable in 1860 as Dr. Parr had found him sixty years before. But, as he grew older, though his perfect courtesy forbade his laughing in people's faces as he had done in youth, he took a mischievous delight in shocking the weak nerves of the conventional, as when he baited Crabb Robinson's solemn German admirations. And when his mischief had led him into a rash statement, he would argue with equal recklessness in its support, piling up paradox from the rich stores of his learning with a ready brilliance which would have delighted Charles Lamb.

A few days later, he invited Emerson to breakfast with Greenough and Francis Hare. Emerson grew impatient of discussing his "cloud of pictures," being eager to see his library, but Hare told him that "Mr. Landor gives away his books, and has never more than a dozen at a time in his house." Going home to write his notes of the event, Emerson recorded:

> Mr. Landor carries to its height the love of freak which the English delight to indulge, as if to signalise their commanding freedom. He has a wonderful brain, despotic, violent, and inexhaustible, meant for a soldier, by what chance converted to letters, in which there is not a style nor a tint not known to him, yet with an English appetite for action and heroes.

Unabashed to find this impression and the details of his long-forgotten conversation published after twenty-three years in *English Traits*, Landor cheerfully compiled in 1856 a commentary in retort, which is not only a magnificent piece of prose, but a brilliant and characteristic exposition of his opinions.

Emerson was an unknown Unitarian pastor of thirty when he met Landor. After him came a still younger man, Richard

Monckton Milnes, just down from Cambridge and bearing an introduction from Julius Hare. Immediately after his arrival at Florence, Milnes fell ill with an "intermittent fever," not then diagnosed as malaria, and on hearing of it, Landor insisted on his leaving his hotel "to come and stay at his beautiful villa as long as I liked." He was in no hurry to leave and stayed several weeks, for, as he wrote to his mother, "Mrs. Landor was as attentive to me and kind as if I had been at home," and "I have my books and Mr. Landor's delightful conversation, and my whole day to myself, and a carriage at my orders whenever I want to drive out."

Consumed with ambitious youth's egotistical appetite for appraisal of only those phenomena immediately useful to his ends, Milnes regarded Landor as a fortunately interesting experience; he gleaned a few ideas from him, and quoted with pride Landor's approval of his compositions. But he had a good memory, from which Forster's biography revived interesting recollections for the most discerning monograph written by one of Landor's personal acquaintance. His long stay enabled him to observe the household with a familiarity available only to close friends, like Brown and Hare, who left no written record. Like Ianthe's son, he had heard much of Landor's local notoriety for "a supposed eccentricity of conduct and violence of demeanour" —he had been expelled from school after thrashing the headmaster, sent down from the university for shooting at a fellow of the college, and outlawed from England for "felling to the ground" a cross-examining barrister. He found in fact an elderly gentleman of "stately and agreeable presence," whose guests "spoke of his affectionate reception, of his complimentary old-world manners, and of his elegant though simple hospitality." He delighted to discuss his pictures, and Milnes noted that those sold at Manchester in 1836 "in no way represented the value of his collection," the best remaining in possession of his family. He liked plenty of space in a room, despising what he called "carpentry" and the English notion of "comfort"—"there is something smothering in the very word," he said; "it takes the

air from about one." Mirrors and lustres were "only fit for inns." He disliked dining out—he wrote this year to his sisters, "I hate everything public, even music"—for he had an epicure's taste in the pleasures of the table, preferring to choose his own food and have it cooked to his liking. "His highest luxury was dining alone, and with little light, and he would often resort to Florence for that purpose." For, he said, "a spider is a gentleman—he eats his fly in secret."

Boythorn is credited with a passionate love of animals and birds, and Milnes remembered how, while his relations with his neighbours were "friendly without familiarity," Landor's favourite companion was his dog. He was never without a dog of some sort—in his later Bath days, his pugnacious Pomeranian called Pomero was well-known, lastly he had another of the same breed named Giallo, now it was Parigi, a splendid mastiff. He would take Parigi's head between his knees, and say, "Ah, if Lord Grey (or any other notoriety of the hour) had a thousandth part of your sense, how different would be things in England!" He despised fear of dogs; "when a dog flies at you, reason with it," he said, and "remember how well-behaved the Molossian dogs were when Ulysses sat down in the midst of them as an equal."

Milnes, who knew all the famous talkers of his day, rated Landor's conversation highly; "so affluent, animated, and coloured, so rich in knowledge and illustration, so gay and yet so weighty—such bitter irony and such lofty praise, uttered with a voice fibrous in all its tones, whether gentle or fierce—it equalled, if not surpassed, all that has been related of the table-talk of men eminent for social speech." He liked open discussion, frank in argument and statement of opinion, as Mrs. Battle liked her whist, with "a clear fire, a clean hearth, and the rigour of the game." He had no use for the spicy badinage and dirty stories of he-men over port; "I enjoy no society," he said, "that makes too free with God or the ladies."

Landor developed an affection for Milnes, who was the first of the rising generation to win his friendship. "I am grieved

that my good Milnes, so pure-hearted, so affectionate, should mix with the busy adventurers of either faction," he wrote in 1839 to Lady Blessington; "his genius is so very far above them, and his fortune so independent." Since Milnes was wealthy, Landor deplored his active participation in politics, believing that a man possessed of both the necessary means and talents demeaned his dignity by pursuing personal ambition, and wasted his opportunity of self-dedication to unfettered occupation with philosophy and letters. His judgment as usual prejudiced by affection, he over-estimated Milnes's talent, and five years later Crabb Robinson disgustedly recorded of a breakfast party "a great deal of rattling on the part of Landor," who asserted among other unconventional shockings, that Milnes was "the greatest poet now living in England."

Apart from the satisfaction of shocking the sententious Robinson, Landor probably conceived no sounder grounds for this exaggerated opinion than pride and gratitude because Milnes had celebrated two of his children in verse. With the ambitious young man of the world's readiness to stand well with his elders, Milnes quickly saw that the surest way to Landor's heart lay through making much of his beloved children. It is perhaps significant that he selected as subjects for his muse, not Landor's favourite Arnold, but the two younger sons—little Carlino, "a child with black eyes and golden hair," and the eleven-year-old Walter, "sweet, serious child,—strange boy," who early delighted his father with his "most wonderful taste and facility in drawing," and seems to have possessed a promise superior to the other children. It is more than likely that Arnold, now fifteen, showed signs of being "spoiled," and Landor was not blinded by affection to the fact, for he wrote this year to his sisters:

> Good Arnold is inclined to be idle. His new tutor will have more authority with him than I have & he is now coming to an age, when ambition will begin to operate a little. But let him be healthy, honorable & well-bred, & I care little about his learning & not much about his accomplishments.

Idleness at school may indicate the sprouting of independence in character, but affords cause for foreboding in surroundings so little endowed with distractions as Landor's Fiesole villa. Landor hoped for the best; he was powerless to do more. Discreetly Milnes noted: "At that time his domesticity, though not cheerful, was not angry."

This is the only reference to the clouds now gathering stormily on Landor's domestic horizon. Brown and Leckie, Francis Hare and Mrs. Dashwood, knew more than Milnes, but they left no record of their impressions. More casual visitors naturally noticed nothing wrong between Landor and his wife.

Among such visitors in the autumn of 1833 were Captain Basil Hall, a minor celebrity as a writer on travel, and Bulwer Lytton, who came with an introduction from Lady Blessington and wrote to her his impressions of Landor. As the author of *Pelham* and *Eugene Aram*, Bulwer was newly hailed as a bright young novelist of the day. "One is at home instantly with men of genius," he wrote, with the *blasé* condescension of a pose suited to his so far insecure reputation; "their oddities, their humours don't put one out half so much as the formal regularity of your half-clever prigs."

> Landor, thanks to your introduction, had no humours nor oddities for me. He invited me to his villa, which is charmingly situated, and smoothed himself down so much, that I thought him one of the best bred men I ever met, as well as one of the most really able: pity nevertheless so far as his talent is concerned, that he pets paradoxes so much; he keeps them as other people keep dogs, coaxes them, plays with them, and now and then sets them to bite a disagreeable intruder.

Neither Bulwer nor his beautiful but vulgar wife much impressed Landor; the dandified young novelist was too deeply absorbed in worldly ambition to win his sympathy, and Rosina Bulwer was to be one of the few women who asked anything of him in vain. Of Bulwer's novels he thought little till, more than twenty years later, he lighted on *The Caxtons*, which he

compared with Sterne. Thereafter, during the last years of his life, Bulwer's novels, after those of his beloved James, were among his favourite reading, though he thought in 1861 that "he writes worse lately."

In the following year, N. P. Willis visited Fiesole. He was a brand of young American very different from Emerson. He possessed superabundantly the qualities applauded by modern commercial travellers and Fleet Street barons as "push" and "drive"—a supply of impudence as ingratiating as inexhaustible, and a mediocre talent which he was prepared to prostitute for any profitable expedient. One of the earliest exponents of "brighter" journalism, he came as a novelty to literary London, on which he imposed himself with complete success. Many suffered at his hands, Thackeray, Marryat, Lockhart, and "Tom" Carlyle—it does not appear that he spoke of "Peggy" Blessington, but Willis had all the modern gossip-writer's freedom with baptismal names.

Landor may be accused of having inflicted Willis on many of his victims, for he provided him with admission to literary London by a letter of introduction to Lady Blessington, as "the best poet the New World has produced." This characteristically rash description implies that he liked Willis, who imposed on many less gracious people, even Harriet Martineau, that acid spinster, allowing that "there was something rather engaging in the round face, brisk air and *enjouement* of the young man." Besides seeking "copy" for his journalistic gossip, Willis collected commissions by securing the work of other writers for American publishers and editors. The imaginary conversation introducing Shakespeare, begun in 1825, had been developed into another form, probably as a result of reading the "Falstaff Letters" given to him by Lamb, and Landor wrote to Lady Blessington on 8th April 1834:

> For some time I have been composing "The Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare, &c., before the Worshipful Sir Thomas Lucy, Knight, touching deer-stealing, on the 19th day of September, in the year of grace 1582, now first published from

Original Papers." This is full of fun—I know not whether of wit. It is the only thing I ever wrote that is likely to sell.

When he asked Willis to carry this manuscript to Lady Blessington, Willis suggested that Landor should allow him to negotiate the publication in America of a selection of the *Imaginary Conversations*.

He assured me they were the most *thumbed* books on his table. With a smile at so energetic an expression of perhaps an undesirable distinction, I offered him unreservedly and unconditionally my only copy of the five printed volumes, interlined and interleaved in most places, which I had employed several years in improving and enlarging, together with my manuscript of the sixth unpublished. He wrote to me on his arrival in England, telling me that they were already on their voyage to their destination.

They never reached it, however, and a year later Landor resigned them as "irreparably lost—Mr. Willises friend never consigned them to the person he mentioned, who is extremely angry that this person (whoever he is—for Mr. Willis never gave me his name) should have said so."

The *Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare* was duly delivered by Willis to Lady Blessington, who declared herself "delighted with it" on 9th June. Landor had such confidence in "the only thing I ever wrote that ever can be popular," that he was prepared to "wager that two thousand copies are sold in six months," and expected that Colburn, the publisher of best-sellers, would give him two hundred pounds for it. But his opinion was only another instance of Landor's inclination imposing upon his judgment. He wanted the money, not for himself, but as a benefaction to an old Rugby schoolfellow who had approached him with a lame-duck story. A few weeks later, however, he received with equanimity the news that Colburn had declined the manuscript, having meanwhile discovered that his schoolfellow—"whom, by-the-bye, I never knew, but who placed enough confidence in me to beg my assistance in his distress"—had got into his trouble by gambling, a vice for which he had always expressed contempt.

Had he even tried but a trifle of assassination, I should have felt for him; or in fact, had he done almost anything else. But to rely on superior skill in spoliation is less pardonable than to rely on superior courage, or than to avenge an affront in a sudden and summary way.

On 10th July Lady Blessington wrote to say that she had placed his manuscript with her own publishers, Saunders and Otley. Apparently they proposed to publish on commission, Landor naturally taking all the profits, but he wrote, with his usual grand scorn for business, to Lady Blessington:

MM. Saunders and Otley ought to hazard nothing by me. . . . It would be dishonourable in me to accept all they offer. I will not take the entire profits. I will take half. . . . I will pay for the dozen copies I give my friends. . . .

Otley professed himself "sensibly touched" by this generosity, and said the work should go to press immediately. Lady Blessington fulfilled Julius Hare's function as agent; with gallant diffidence Landor deprecated that she should "have really taken the trouble to overlook the sheets." Her intentions were doubtless excellent, but she failed to realise his fastidious care for accuracy and thoroughness. On its publication in the autumn, he reflected in a letter to Southey his horror on receiving the book:

I hope my publisher sent you the *Examination of Shakespeare*—alas that I should say it! the very worst-printed book that ever fell into my hands. "*Volubly* discreet!" "slipped into" for "stripped unto!" "Sit mute" for "stand"; with many, many others! And then there are words I never use, such as "utmost"; I always write "uttermost." In fact the misprints amount to forty of the grosser kind, and I know not how many of the smaller!

Perhaps Lady Blessington had read the *Imaginary Conversations* less thoroughly than her reverent admiration suggested, and among those she skipped was that in which Johnson discusses spelling and language with Horne Tooke. Chivalry recoiled

from the merest hint to her of his disappointment in the *Examination,* but the following year, on sending a contribution to the annual she was editing, he begged her "to retain my orthography in the poem I send you, lest I should appear to countenance any violation, any innovation, of our language." He referred to "my Johnson and Tooke" as "highly necessary for the restoration of our language," and added:

> There never was, and never could be, such a word as cherish'*d,* as clasp'*d,* as shriek'*d,* as cross'*d,* as dropp'*d,* as press'*d.* And if you inserted the *e,* you had destroyed the verse. I would retain both cross*ed* and cro*st,* dropp*ed* and dro*pt* &c., &c. But we ought to use in writing the words we use in speaking, and we should write them as we speak them, consistently with analogy. I write as Englishmen wrote before literary men courted the vulgar, or gentlemen were the hirelings of booksellers; and I have not altered any word whatever; I have restored the rights of many.

His correspondence with Gabb reveals that, as early as 1813, he wrote *exclame* and *proclame,* as true to Latin derivation, *favor* and *honor* in the American manner, and *fulfill* and *compell* with the double consonant. But he had not yet begun to insist that *til* should be written as in *until,* and the various notions illustrated in the Tooke-Johnson dialogue owed their inspiration to his learning of Italian and renewed classical studies when he first came to Italy. In *Tait's Magazine* for March 1847, De Quincey challenged Landor's spelling theories in an amusing essay on "*Othographic Mutineers;*" making fun of Landor's insistence on calling Aristotle Aristoteles because one could not call Empedocles Empedocle, he argued that, on the same principle, since he called Virgilius Virgil, he should write Valer for Valerius—though yet again he should not, "because as he says Tully and not Tull for Tullius, so also he is bound in Christian equity to say Valery for Valer"—and since he persisted in calling Ovidius Ovid, "he must call Didius Julianus by the shocking name of *Did.*"

§ 2

In the spring of 1835, Mrs. Sophia Paynter, half-sister of Rose Aylmer and the fifth Lord Aylmer, visited Florence. When Landor had last seen her, she had been a little girl with pigtails down her back, walking on the sands of Swansea with her hand in that of her elder half-sister. "Give me Swansea for scenery and climate," Landor had written a few years before to his sister Ellen; "If ever it should be my fortune, which I cannot expect, and do not much hope, to return to England, I shall pass the remainder of my days in the neighbourhood of Swansea, between that place and the Mumbles." When she came to him with an introduction from her half-brother, Aylmer, old associations alone inspired him to give Mrs. Paynter a warm welcome; when he recognised in the younger of her daughters reminiscences of her long-dead aunt, friendship for the future was assured.

Moving from Florence to Rome, Mrs. Paynter carried introductions to Francis Hare, "the best informed as well as the best natured man you will meet in Italy," and to Miss Mackenzie of Seaforth, with whom Landor had corresponded since his visit to Rome with Hare. On his return from England in 1832, he had promised Ablett to repeat his visit in three years' time, and in November 1834 he wrote to his sister Elizabeth that Ablett had reminded him of his promise, and "certainly I shall see you next April or May." On 3rd April 1835 he informed Mrs. Paynter that "I did think of going to England, but if I do, I shall return by November." He added:

> I am losing all my friends. Mr. Brown, an intelligent and most friendly man, is gone to England with a resolution never to return to Italy. Mr. James goes to-morrow with the same resolution. I cannot bear the idea of seeing anything for the last time. There is something in those two monosyllables that weighs very heavily on the heart; more heavily than volumes of school divinity.

The words reflected the emotional struggle then harrowing

him, for he was facing the alternative of sacrificing his self-respect and pride or leaving forever everything material that he valued.

Superficially Landor's marriage presents a commonplace story of incompatibility. To suggest that he married his wife on an impulse because she was the prettiest girl in a ballroom, is to indict him as a cynic or a fool—in either case as a callous eccentric excellently qualified for membership of the Monks of Medmenham. Neither fool nor cynic, he possessed, moreover, a sensitive conscience, which would have caused his recoil in horror from marriage with a woman whom he could not honour with all the tributes he considered due a wife. For four or five years he had considered the prospect of marriage; he recognised Ianthe as the ideal of his desires, but when he surrendered hope of persuading her to leave her husband for him, he seriously sought what he believed to be the next best thing. He disdained neither his sister's warning against pretty innocents nor Southey's counsel "to find out a woman whom you can esteem." But as Milnes said, "his feeling for female beauty was intense—he demanded beauty in woman as imperatively as honesty in men, yet was hardly submissive to its influence; just as, while he was intolerant to folly, he would have been impatient of any competing ability."

Landor was not blind to his own liabilities as a husband. As he informed Southey on the eve of the marriage, he chose Julia Thuillier because she was "pretty, graceful, good-tempered—three things indispensable to my happiness." Her youth he must have reckoned an asset. He would have taken Ianthe with all her faults, but any other woman of matured character must have antagonised him in a way to erect insuperable differences between them. He hoped to mould the character of a young girl, whose trusting innocence inspired tenderness, in default of passion, by appealing to his chivalry.

Events could hardly have taken a more unpropitious turn for the success of such a marriage. Instead of being a queen of society in a stately mansion, the girl found herself in uncom-

fortable lodgings in an unfriendly and lonely environment. Harassed by his hostile "annoyancers," Landor had no time to notice, much less to soothe and sympathise with, her sense of disillusion. He never felt for her any such passion as Ianthe inspired, but in the beginning, he did feel tenderness and admiration. For him she felt the admiration of a girl for a man in the prime of life, of enviable personal attraction, and generally reckoned of brilliant intellectual promise—a feeling which, discreetly directed, might have quickly developed into devotion.

Apparently, in those first difficult years, she tried to share his interests; when he distributed the handbills against Fred Betham at Usk, he was accompanied by "his amiable and elegant wife." Doubtless she more than shared his resentment against the chicanery of the lawyers and the dishonesty of authority, for she had youth's impetuosity and the eagerness of ignorance to echo the opinions of the object of her admiration. She may be pictured defending with spirit the justice of her husband's conduct from the disapproving criticism of a mother who knew the value of money. But however far she had sympathised with his spirit of rebellion, she shrank in horror from the realisation of exile, of leaving behind her Bath and her family, the social circle in which she had expected to shine with the pomp of position and wealth. She fell into hysterical recrimination, using against Landor the gibes which she had hotly refuted when mentioned by her mother.

She received a second rub from life's rough edge on finding her family, though loud in condemnation of her husband, in no mood to welcome her in the character of an injured grass widow. When Landor heard of her grief and illness, his chivalry responded to the pathetic plight of the graceful, pretty girl, whose buoyant young hopes had been rudely dashed by his misfortunes. He must have been conscious that she had failed him in the first crisis which called for a wife's comfort and intuitive understanding, such as he might have received from the more maternal instinct of a mature woman. But it was never his nature to repine, especially over his own actions—he had

married an inexperienced girl, and could not expect in her the qualities of an older woman. He took her back tenderly, prepared to make a fresh start.

But she rejoined him with too much inclination to a martyr's resignation. So far from being a clinging vine, whose youthful tendrils might be trained to climb about the trunk of an established masculine character, she saw herself as a winsome beauty, deprived of her due meed of homage and amusement by her husband's eccentric conduct. Feeling self-pity as a sacrifice to wifely duty, she expected in him an attitude of humble gratitude for her gracious condescension. It was unfortunate that Robert Landor's antagonism against his brother, and consequent sympathy with her, encouraged her assumption of this attitude. Generosity always awakened in Landor a responsive chord, but an attitude of exaction was the surest way to exasperate him.

Henceforth, Mrs. Landor cherished the grievance of a woman who conceived herself to be denied due appreciation. She seized every opportunity of drawing attention to her own merits, and of railing against Landor's refusal to recognise them. Her grievance made her a shrew. After Dickens, calling at the Villa Gherardescha in 1853, had seen her, he related to Landor how she was "walking with a rapid and firm step, had bright eyes, a fine fresh colour, and looked animated and agreeable."

> Landor checked off each clause of the description, with a stately nod of more than ready assent, and replied, with all his tremendous energy concentrated into the sentence: "And the Lord forbid that I should do otherwise than declare that she always was agreeable—to every one but *me!*"

She took a morbidly malicious delight in exerting her charm to win the liking and compliments of others, so that she might afterwards taunt Landor with being singular in his failure to value the virtues thus generally admired.

As Milnes said, it was "small reproach to any woman that she did not possess a sufficient union of charm, tact, and intelligence to suit Landor as a wife." He was not an easy man to

live with. But a woman of wisdom and humour would have laughed him out of his irritable outbursts, soothed his vexations with affectionate sympathy, and made the most of his qualities of chivalry, generosity, ready affection, and boisterous love of fun. In the first years in Italy, he could have been easily won; he had a fund of tenderness and great susceptibility to feminine beauty. But his wife's perpetual reproaches tormented his sensitiveness, inspiring a sense of injustice such as never failed to inflame his indignation throughout his life. With time he became case-hardened, retreatng in dudgeon from her puling recriminations to the seclusion of his study, and his wife, left alone to nurse her smouldering resentment, grudged the refuge he found in his work as callous disregard of her feelings.

From the little beginnings of trivial bickerings develop the daily discord and complete absence of sympathy, which make of marriage a burden of bitterness. The Wallace portrait of Mrs. Landor, painted in her middle thirties, amply indicates her beauty and grace, but the face plainly suggests peevishness of temper, unhappiness, and ill-health. She was not a delicate woman; she bore her four children without fuss or trouble, she lived to be eighty-five, and Dickens's glimpse suggests that in her sixtieth year, she was well-preserved, strong, and active. But discovering that Landor, like most physically strong men, was deeply moved by the sight of pain, she fell into the habit of querulous indisposition as a potent weapon of reproach. As early as June 1816 at Como, Robert Landor, a witness sympathetic to her, noted that she "looks thin, but not pale; talks much of dying, and of returning to Bath, preferring the latter a little." After the birth of her children, she evidently became a hypochondriac; estimating his expenses in 1834, Landor told his agent, "My wife has a Doctor in the house at least a hundred days in the year & a nurse at least fifty." From his account of his dispute with Antoir in *High and Low Life in Italy*, it appears that she was "subject to convulsions from the slightest cause, and suffering from an affection of the nerves, which en-

dangered her existence, and for which alone Mr. Landor was induced to purchase his residence in Tuscany."

It was for the sake of her health that Landor had taken the Villa Castiglione as a summer residence in 1825, when he wrote, "I wish Julia would consent to live entirely in the country, but she cannot live without some company in the evening." Though they lived in the country for her sake, yet she found cause for complaint; it was very well for him to be content in the country—he had his boks and was over fifty—but was she, in her thirties and still attractive, never to enjoy the pleasures of a ball, and a box at the opera? When he told his sisters in 1831 of the excellent health enjoyed by himself and the children since coming to Fiesole, he added sardonically: "My wife runs after colds; it would be strange if she did not take them; but she has taken none here; hers are all from Florence." Clearly her excursions to Florence were not unattended by acid references to the consequence of her gadding in bringing home contagious germs to the children, which she could debit as usual to his selfish lack of feeling.

Children are often the bond which holds together an ill-assorted couple in spite of themselves. For many years their children kept Landor and his wife together, but they were finally the cause of their parents' separation. By a woman of Mrs. Landor's jealous and neurotic temperament, Landor's devotion to his children afforded, not a foundation for common interest and affection, but an obvious opening for attack. A devoted and affectionate, though unwise, mother, she habitually opposed her influence over the children against Landor's; not merely from her antagonism to him, but primarily on account of jealousy of their affection for him. Forster unjustly attributed the neglect of the children's education to Landor's blind and doting fondness, which inspired selfish reluctance to be parted from them. Truly he had hurried back from Rome with Blessington to Arnold like a clucking hen to its chick, and had declined to send him as a child to his mother in England. But

to his sister in 1825 he had emphasised that it was "while they are children" that he wished not "to be a day without any one of them," for "they are different creatures when they grow up." In the same year he confided to his mother his plan of sending Arnold to Eton "for about three years" when he reached the age of twelve or thirteen, and nearly two years later he declared that "nothing but the education and settlement of my children would make me at all desirous of seeing England again." His visit to England in 1832 separated him from all his children for six months; it was Mrs. Landor who refused to be parted from them. He had promised "my dear Arnold to bring him with me," and the boy was "grieved at the disappointment"—it was his mother who "would not let him go."

There is reason to surmise that, by this time, Mrs. Landor feared to let any of the children accompany their father to England lest he might be persuaded to keep them there. For she realised that he now continued to live with her only for the children's sake. All pretence of marital relationship was over between them. To his brother Henry, Landor wrote in June 1836: "I have found her bedroom locked and all the doors leading to it, more than once. Many years ago!" The door would not have to be found locked many times before he entirely abstained from his wife's bed; his pride, apart from decent repugnance against assertion of marital rights upon an unwilling woman, would prevent his offering attentions not merely unwelcome, but even casually received.

Probably the cessation of marital relations occurred during, or as a consequence of, Ianthe's visit to Florence in 1829. It is significant that, though Landor delighted in feminine society, he enjoyed no friendships with women, apart from his sisters-in-law and Francis Hare's cousin, Mrs. Dashwood, from the time of his marriage till he met Lady Blessington. The unreasoning jealousy which resented her children's affection for their father, naturally inspired Mrs. Landor to regard with hostility, as a potential rival, every woman admired by her husband. His

friendship with Lady Blessington developed as a consequence of Blessington's friendship with him, but it is noticeable that Mrs. Landor shared in neither intimacy, and Lady Blessington's letters contain no messages of courtesy to her.

Ianthe came without concealment as a resurrection from Landor's past. He was improbably so tactless that he informed his wife, as he reminded his sister, that she was "the dearest of all the friends I ever had or ever shall have," but he would have to account for her writing to him after a lapse of nearly twenty years, and for his eagerness in making arrangements for her reception. It would weigh nothing with Mrs. Landor that Ianthe was more than ten years her senior, that she was the mother of married children, and that, if she had refused Landor in his prime for the sake of children yet too young to reproach her, she was now less likely to risk incurring a scandal. Burning jealousy allowed her only to see the eagerness and frequency of Landor's visits to her, his happiness and high spirits in romping with her children, his chivalrous devotion to, and perfect accord with, this gay and charming woman of the world—and contrasting this with his demeanour to herself, without reflecting on her own share in the wreckage of their relations, she did not fail to give full play to this latest weapon of recrimination. Landor's response may be imagined; obviously he had asserted his right to free expression of his own individuality, and the bedroom door was locked, when in 1831 the series of poems to Ianthe appeared with the prominence of a separate section in *Gebir, Count Julian, and Other Poems*.

Whether Mrs. Landor immediately revenged herself with a lover does not appear, but she had ample opportunities during her pleasure trips alone to Florence. In March 1833 Landor told his sisters how "nothing can be more kind" than old Lord Wenlock "always is to me and all my family, offering his box at the opera, beds at his house &c." "These things," he added, "I do not accept," since he had no inclination "to be from home a single evening," but he did not say whether his wife accepted them. There was no reason why she should not, for Wenlock

was sufficiently venerable and the old friend of Landor's father. He was so old, and almost blind, that, while he might entertain Mrs. Landor at his dinner table, he was little inclined to escort her to the opera. She would excuse an old man's infirmities, and allow his secretary to deputise as her escort. His secretary, a young Irishman named MacCarthy, became Mrs. Landor's lover.

It matters little how long the affair progressed before Landor knew of it. His wife's physical infidelity had no power to rouse him to much emotion; it was only the inevitable culmination of the discomforts with which she had afflicted him for years. He continued to live with her solely for the sake of the children, from whom, with the savagery of a tigress over her cubs, she refused to be parted. "My wife will not give up the children," he assured his brother Henry in June 1836; "she swore she never would. Otherwise I would have taken them out of Italy some years before." So long as she averted the taint of scandalous gossip, he was indisposed to inquire into her personal affairs.

But it seems likely that Landor continued ignorant of his wife's *liaison* till she introduced her lover to his household. Lord Wenlock died in April 1834, leaving MacCarthy not only without a job, but with no legacy or advance of salary. He was "forced to borrow 8 dollars" from Landor, who, though he had reason to "believe that Lord Wenlock became but little fond of Macarthy," befriended him, and "during the absence of Arnold's tutor, I took him into my house in that capacity, hearing that he was absolutely destitute." This much Landor confided to his brother Henry in a letter of June 1834; he naturally disclosed no suggestion that his wife had made any representations on MacCarthy's behalf.

His letter suggests that he intended the appointment to be temporary, but once having introduced her lover to the household, Mrs. Landor took care that he should remain. Four months later, Landor wrote casually to his sisters: "Arnold's German tutor has obtained a good situation at Rome, and we

have engaged Mr. MacCarthy, who was secretary to Lord Wenlock." He also remarked that Julia's governess, the Countess von Schaffgotsch, had left soon after MacCarthy's arrival, and a Miss D'Arville, formerly governess to Mrs. Collingwood's daughters, had succeeded her. Finally he wrote of arrangements to visit England, "next April or May. Julia will go to her mother, and take the two youngest. I will make my first visit to you, with Arnold and Julia, and after a week or fortnight procede to Denbighshire."

Apparently this arrangement occasioned the final breach. Mrs. Landor had no wish to be separated from her lover for six months or more; she was also afraid that Landor, having succeeded in taking the two eldest children to England, might refuse to allow them to return to her. As the time of the proposed visit in the spring of 1835 drew near, she argued against it; finding Landor was determined, she resorted to the contemptuous abuse of a shameless adulteress to a complacent cuckold. When he remained unmoved, and followed his usual habit of resignedly retreating from her tantrums to the refuge of his study, her desperate rage goaded her to insult him in the presence of others.

At the end of March, Armitage Brown was invited to a farewell dinner before leaving Florence to settle in England, and Mrs. Landor made a scene before him. Asked by Landor afterwards to describe her expressions, in order that members of the family might be convinced that he had not left her without good cause, Brown wrote:

> I am ashamed to write down the words, but to hear them was painful (passage here omitted by Forster, who apparently destroyed the original letter). . . . I am afraid my patience would have left me in a tenth part of the time; but you, to my astonishment, sat with a composed countenance, never once making use of an uncivil expression, unless the following may be so considered, when after about an hour, she seemed exhausted: "I beg, madam, you will, if you think proper, proceed; as I made up my mind, from the first, to endure at least twice as much as you have been yet pleased to speak." After dinner, when I saw her leave the

room, I followed, and again pointed out her mistake; when she readily agreed with me, saying she was convinced you were not to blame. At this I could not forbear exclaiming, "Well then" in the hope of bearing back to you some slight acknowledgment of regret on her part: but in this I was disappointed.

Realising that if she could thus shamelessly taunt him before his friends, she would soon invite his children's contempt by humiliating him before them, Landor decided to leave her.

To Southey he wrote months later:

> It was not willingly that I left Tuscany and my children. There was but one spot upon earth on which I had fixed my heart, and four objects on which my affection rested. That they might not hear every day such language as no decent person should ever hear once, nor despise both parents, I left the only delight of my existence.

He went first to Florence in April, and thence for the summer to the Baths of Lucca, where he waited anxious months while Francis Hare, Mrs. Dashwood, and Miss Mackenzie severally tried to persuade his wife to allow the two elder children to accompany their father to England. Once their persuasions succeeded so far that arrangements were made for Arnold and Julia to meet him at Verona—"Verona! loveliest of cities, but saddest to my memory!" he wrote in the *Pentameron* a year later—on his way to England, but Mrs. Landor at the last moment repented of the concession. After six months he resigned hope, setting out alone for England, where he arrived at the end of September 1835.

CHAPTER X

THE LION IN HIS PRIME

§ 1

LANDOR SPENT THE SUMMER OF 1835 at the Baths of Lucca in writing *Pericles and Aspasia.* In a letter carried by Milnes to Southey he said:

> I began a conversation between Pericles and Aspasia, and thought I could do better by a series of letters between them, not uninterrupted; for the letters should begin with their first friendship, should give place to their conversations afterwards, and recommence on their supposed separation during the plague of Athens. Few materials are extant. . . . So much the better. The coast is clear: there are neither rocks nor weeds before me.

In the light of this letter, it seems incredible that a critic of Colvin's apparent integrity could object that "*Pericles and Aspasia,* like some of the classical *Conversations,* has the misfortune of being weighted with disquisitions too learned for the general reader, and not sound enough for the special student." Landor never intended to write for the academic student; in the "advertisement" which served as substitute for preface, he stated plainly, "He who opens these Letters for a History of the Times, will be disappointed. Did he find it in a Montague's or a Walpole's?"

Nor did he ever attempt to write for "the general reader." "I never will write to please the public, but always to instruct and mend it," he wrote to Lady Blessington in November 1836:

"If Colburn would give me twenty thousand pounds to write a *taking* thing I would not accept it." If his preliminary arrangements with publishers may be taken to reflect his expectations, he cherished optimistic hopes that each work he wrote would take popular fancy by storm, for he always anticipated profits which hardly ever eventuated—a distressed clergyman was to benefit from the proceeds of his first book, his ruined Spanish friend at Castro from the acting of *Count Julian*, the poor of Leipzig from his Latin *Idyllia*, an old schoolfellow from the *Citation and Examination of Shakespeare*, and so on till, in the month of his eighty-sixth birthday, he was writing an imaginary conversation between Virgil and Ovid in the hope of a magazine editor's giving "a few crowns for it to the subscription towards the wounded under the command of Garibaldi." So innocent was he of popular taste that he believed a purely academic *jeu d'esprit* like the *Citation* to be his one production likely to achieve big sales.

Pericles and Aspasia is a discursive philosophical debate in the form of an epistolary romance, but he did not conceive the framework of the story as a coat of sugar for his pill. As the historical novelist uses historical characters and background for the purpose of a story, Landor used them as the protagonists and setting for philosophical discussion. The medium of correspondence instead of conversation afforded the advantages of longer and more varied elaborations of thought, of enabling the characters to interchange remarks about each other, and of unfolding an epic narrative over a period of years. Such as it is, the plot follows the pattern of the classical or heroic tragedy, as practised by Dryden. The main theme is the love of Pericles and Aspasia: the story opens with Aspasia's arrival at Athens, her first meeting with Pericles being staged at a performance of Aeschylus's *Prometheus Bound*, and ends with letters from Alcibiades to Aspasia, describing Pericles' death during the plague of Athens and the Spartan invasion, and the last glimpse of Aspasia's friend Cleone weeping by her lover's tomb. The under-plot is this love of Cleone for Xeniades, a rejected lover

of Aspasia, and most of the letters are between her and Aspasia. Another correspondent, the old philosopher Anaxagoras, Landor identified largely with himself, writing to Aspasia as he might have written to Lady Blessington in the classical age. Socrates, Aristophanes, Pythagoras, Thucydides, occur in the correspondence with the casual familiarity of Wordsworth, Lamb, De Quincey, and Coleridge in Landor's own letters to Lady Blessington, Southey, Crabb Robinson, and Forster. The atmosphere is the atmosphere of classical Athens, but the philosophical arguments are ageless. Faced with exile from his home, Landor seems to have used up all the manuscript notes of his thoughts and reading accumulated in his study for years; consequently, *Pericles and Aspasia* is the richest of his works in profundity and variety of thought, as it is also the richest in the sheer magnificence of its prose. Colvin was no more than just in saying, "The spirit of beauty, indeed, reigns, as it reigns in hardly any other modern writing, over the thoughts and language of the characters, and the two volumes are perhaps the richest mine which English prose literature contains of noble and unused quotations."

Like the first *Imaginary Conversations,* the book grew far beyond the bounds of Landor's original conception. He had offered the book to Saunders and Otley, and not caring to risk another unhappy experience of Lady Blessington's proof-correcting, he asked G. P. R. James, who was himself then publishing with the same firm, to act as his agent. "When I offered my Pericles to MM. Saunders & Otley," he wrote to James, "I did not suppose there was more than enough for one volume, the size of the Examination of Shakespeare," and James, more shrewd, as a professional novelist, in bargaining than either Hare or Lady Blessington, secured an agreement by which the publishers promised a hundred pounds for a book of that size. When Landor brought the manuscript with him to England, the publishers found it too long for the proposed volume, whereupon he elected to lengthen the manuscript in order to fill two volumes. He supplied a further hundred pages, but in

January 1836 they advised him that there was still insufficient material to make a second volume of more than 175 pages, and he wrote to James:

> In reply to their letter I have said that, if they will give me fifty pounds more, I will send one hundred more pages, 50 within three weeks, 50 more in the three following; and if this does not appear equitable to them, I leave it entirely to you. I shall then have given them 200 pp. for fifty pounds, when I offered them only 285 for a hundred.

The publishers agreed, and Landor more than fulfilled his contract, for, besides lengthening the text of *Pericles and Aspasia*, he made the second volume bulkier than the first by the addition of a "letter to an Author," elaborating his arguments on language and orthography, and "Reflections on Athens at the decease of Pericles," introducing his advocacy of church disestablishment, reform of the House of Lords, and other political ideas.

His long letter to James was written on 18th January from Llanbedr, where, said Forster, "he stayed three months." "The first of Feb I set out for Clifton," he told James, "an old favourite of mine for winter and spring." From Clifton he wrote on 19th March in reply to Lady Blessington's pressing invitation to stay with her at her splendid new home at Gore House:

> Really I do not know whether I shall have the courage to make a visit to London. What would charm everybody else, disheartens me. I am not indifferent to grace, to wit, to friendship, more than formerly—but I tremble at literary men. I am inclined to believe that I can have the best of them to myself for as little as a plate of strawberries at this season, and can avoid the dust of the little skirmishes in which they are perpetually engaged. They do not like one another, they would dislike me. Besides, I am out of spirits at dinner if there are more than five or six people. To confess the truth, I like best dining quite alone, taking my glass of water, my coffee, and my siesta—uniting as much of the Christian as I remember with as much of the Turk as I can. There may be something wolfish in this solitariness—I cannot help it—I acknowledge

that when I look at myself I seem rather too like little Red-Riding-hood's grand-mama. Cleverness, learning, eloquence, are capital things. When they are brought round to me, I take my spoonful, but I do not desire the fumes of them at table.

But Lady Blessington assured him that "quiet and friendship await you," and having received *Pericles and Aspasia,* sentimentally gushed her thanks for "the very highest intellectual feast" she had ever enjoyed:

> Never was there so beautiful a mirror of wisdom and tenderness. . . . I am proud of, and for you, and repeat frequently to myself—*he is my friend.* . . . Everyone talks of your books, and everyone is loud in its praises. . . . Never was there such a triumph as you have achieved by this book! !

So he went to Gore House, and many men less willing to please and to be pleased, less simple in their happiness at feeling appreciated, and less soured by long starving of just recognition, have enjoyed being lionised.

Throughout the first half of his long life, he hungered vainly for recognition and appreciation; with belt tightened, he had faced life with the disgruntled aggressiveness of the hungry. During the past ten years at Florence, undisputed eminence in a small provincial circle and gracious reception of pilgrims to his shrine had appeased his grievance and mellowed his character. Now, for the first time, London received him on his merits. That it was not the London he had longed to shine in, the London of Pitt and Parr, Coleridge, Scott, and the youthful Byron, made his triumph more serene. As a respected veteran, he was aloof from the petty jealousies and "little skirmishes" of the rising generation, which accepted him unquestioned as an elder writer of established fame.

He was the more readily accepted since he fitted the part to admirable advantage. Forster met him this summer for the first time, and described him as looking fully his age of sixty-one, though he "had a stout stalwart presence, walked without a stoop, and in his general aspect, particularly the set and car-

riage of his head, was decidedly of what is called a distinguished bearing." His silver hair had retreated to lend noble dignity to a broad and massive forehead, which combined with "the full yet strangely lifted eyebrows, flatness of cheek and jaw, wide upper lip, retreating mouth and chin, and heavy neck," to impress with that leonine look which everybody remarked, and he himself came to like being remarked.

> In the large gray eyes there was a depth of composed expression that even startled by its contrast to the eager restlessness looking out from the surface of them; and in the same variety and quickness of transition the mouth was extremely striking. The lips that seemed compressed with unalterable will would in a moment relax to a softness more than feminine; and a sweeter smile it was impossible to conceive.

Milnes also emphasised "the sweetness and humour of the mouth which redeemed the anti-social character of the upper features." Allied to this prepossessing appearance, the old-fashioned stateliness of his courtly manners, the eagerness of his talk on any subject and his genius for enriching any conversation from the wealth of his intellect, the readiness of his boisterous laugh, and his utter innocence of clique or faction—all inspired liking and admiration. He was essentially "a fine old boy."

The time of his arrival in London was propitious for his celebrity. The deaths of Coleridge, Lamb, and Scott had left literature temporarily bereft of imposing personalities; Dickens and Thackeray were yet unknown; nobody could muster much enthusiasm for second-raters like Tom Moore, Campbell, and Sam Rogers. Nor could his public introduction to fashionable society have been more happily staged. Talfourd, a contributor to the *London Magazine* in its palmy days, the friend of Lamb, a celebrated barrister, and member of Parliament, wrote a tragedy, *Ion*, which enjoyed great success. On the first night of its production at Covent Garden by Macready, who was becoming recognised as Edmund Kean's successor as England's greatest tragedian, Crabb Robinson had a box, and scored a social

triumph by including both Wordsworth and Landor among his guests. Wordsworth's public appearances were rare, Landor's face and figure were unknown; when the two were identified by the crowded theatre, it must have seemed that Robinson's box contained the last two surviving giants of the departed literary generation.

After the show, Talfourd gave a splendid supper at his house, and Macready, ever quick to take offence if he suspected insufficient recognition of his importance, felt satisfied on being "very happily placed between Wordsworth and Landor, with Browning opposite, and Mrs. Talfourd next but one—Talfourd within two." He talked freely with his "two illustrious neighbours," and Landor, who promised to send him a copy of *Count Julian,* he "very much liked."

For several days Landor saw much of Wordsworth, whose London visit coincided with his own. Dining at Kenyon's, they were both seen for the first time by Mary Russell Mitford and Elizabeth Barrett. Miss Mitford, a pleasant little bundle of a woman, wrote in idle chatter to her father that Landor was "as splendid a person as Mr. Kenyon, but not so full of sweetness and sympathy." Miss Barrett, as Kenyon's cousin, Landor wished to please, though his taste for feminine beauty can hardly have been attracted. He talked with her "for about ten minutes," and having heard that she was "an excellent Greek scholar," gave her some Greek verses which he "happened to recollect at the moment." She, however, had eyes for none but the great Wordsworth. Grudgingly she confessed that "perhaps I should not have singled him from the multitude as a great man," and that his face "does not lighten as Landor's does," but she "trembled both in my soul and body" while talking to him. Determined to adore the taciturn Wordsworth, she was annoyed that Landor contrasted favourably in the brilliance of his conversation, his charm of manner, and easy geniality. Landor "talked brilliantly and prominently" till her brother, who must have been an unhappily mannered young man, "abused him for *ambitious* singularity and affectation," and Miss Barrett after-

wards wrote that Wordsworth's "manners are very simple and his conversation not at all *prominent*—if you quite understand what I mean by *that*. I do myself, for I saw at the same time Landor—the brilliant Landor!—and *felt* the difference between great genius and eminent talent." After she became Browning's wife and came to know Landor well, this early prejudice remained to prevent her sharing her husband's affection and admiration for him; though she liked him unwillingly, she admitted in the last year of her life that he was always "unsympathetical to me . . . in his *morale*."

Elizabeth Barrett felt no greater enthusiasm for Wordsworth's poetry than Landor had avowed during many years before it received general recognition, but his habit of thought and feeling was too instinctively sincere for self-deception in his reactions to the man. Bitterly disappointed in Wordsworth at their first meeting, he had disdained any pretence of his former enthusiasm even by continuing his cordial messages in letters to Southey, and better acquaintance now confirmed his antipathy. Wordsworth's ruthless self-centredness, his inhuman unresponsiveness to warm affection, his callous ingratitude for the emotions his gifts inspired in others, repelled Landor as they had alienated De Quincey and "Christopher North." Finally, Landor's disgust at his lack of generosity to contemporaries deepened to indignation when he heard that Wordsworth had remarked that he would not give five shillings a ream for Southey's poetry. Such deprecation of his beloved Southey would have annoyed him from anybody else, but coming from Southey's oldest friend and neighbour, it shocked him as abominable treachery. In his anger he dashed off and gave to Lady Blessington the lines:

> Tho' Southey's poetry to thee should seem
> Not worth five shillings (such thy phrase) the ream
> Courage! good wary Wordsworth! and disburse
> The whole amount from that prudential purse.
> Here, take my word, 'tis neither shame nor sin
> To venture boldly, all thy own thrown in. . . .

In the late autumn of the same year, these lines appeared in *A Satire on Satirists*, in which he roundly rebuked Wordsworth's grudging regard for other poets, after instancing his lack of feeling by declaring that he alone of the audience had been unmoved at the performance of *Ion*.

Receiving a presentation copy of the satire on 7th December, Crabb Robinson "thought it right to remonstrate with Landor." He admitted the fact that Wordsworth "does not appreciate other poets as they deserve," but declined to acknowledge "the justice of its being imputed to him as a crime." Other men of genius had refused justice to their peers: "Voltaire and Rousseau hated each other; Fielding despised Richardson; Petrarch, Dante, Michael Angelo sneered at Raphael." What did it matter if Wordsworth was insensible to others' merits?

> He is, after all, Wordsworth. In all cases I care little what a man is *not;* I look to what he *is*. And Wordsworth has written a hundred poems the least excellent of which I would not sacrifice to give him that openness of heart you require.

To this lawyer's defence, Landor might have retorted that the reason of his dislike was precisely because Wordsworth was Wordsworth—that, while he admired the poet, he disliked the man.

But with dignity Robinson also reminded him that "among my obligations to Wordsworth is this—that I owe to him the honour of your acquaintance," and that most of the materials of the satire were taken "from opinions uttered by him in the freedom of unpremeditated conversation in my presence." With his fine sense of courtesy, the imputation of a breach of hospitality must have made Landor's cheeks burn, however much his loyalty argued that his duty to Southey demanded more than a lapse of manners towards such a casual friend as Robinson. He also respected Robinson for his loyal defence of a friend, and in deference to his deprecatory allusion that Byron had failed in a malicious attempt to cause a rift between Wordsworth and

Southey, he recalled a copy of the *Satire* which he had ordered to be sent to Southey.

His friendship with Robinson continued cordial, but he had no further intercourse with Wordsworth, whose conduct during Southey's last illness intensified his dislike. In the second imaginary conversation between Southey and Porson, published in *Blackwood's Magazine* for December 1842, he mercilessly exposed Wordsworth's defects, and the criticism carried the more conviction because it also fairly weighed his merits. But such was the change in the popular estimate of Wordsworth that Landor's shrewd criticism in 1842 was accounted as extravagant as his enthusiastic praise in 1823. When Forster, among others, protested against his hostility to Wordsworth, he wrote in 1845:

> No writer . . . has praised Wordsworth more copiously or more warmly than I have done; and I said not a syllable against him until he disparaged his friend and greatest champion, Southey. You should be the last to blame me for holding the heads of my friends to be inviolable. Whoever touches a hair of them I devote *diis inferis, sed rite.*

But those who too readily believed his head to follow unreasoningly the dictates of his heart, had to allow that his personal animosity did not vitiate his appreciation of Wordsworth's work; he privately praised the *Prelude* as "the Eikon Basilike of poetry," and after Wordsworth's death, in the conversation between Julius Hare and himself, he defended with dignity and justice his estimate of Wordsworth.

> Discriminating praise mingled with calm censure is more beneficial than lavish praise without it. Respect him; reverence him; abstain from worshipping him.

And in the same imaginary conversation, he claimed no more than his due in believing "there are few, if any, who enjoy more heartily than I do, the best poetry of my contemporaries, or who have commended them both in private and in public with less parsimony and reserve."

Accused by a mutual friend of treachery to his oldest friend, a man of generous feeling would have written a private letter to justify or expostulate. But, with a stoical air of dignity in affliction, Wordsworth regretted the "indiscretions" of his son-in-law Quillinan in bringing the *Satire* to his notice, and "felt much obliged to his London friends for never having mentioned the circumstances to him." To Robinson he denied that he had disparaged Southey; he also denied any obligation to *Gebir* for a passage in *The Excursion*, which Landor, in a note to the *Satire*, had cited, beside the parallel passage of his own poem, as proof of his indebtedness. Robinson noted that the *Satire* "seemed to give Wordsworth little annoyance—he had not read, and meant never to read, the *Satire*." Monumental in self-sufficiency, serene in the sense of his own greatness, he could afford, without word or gesture, to drop a friend whose generous praise he had gratefully welcomed many years before. When, in 1843, filial loyalty inspired Quillinan to reply in *Blackwood* to the Southey-Porson dialogue, Landor assumed equal indifference, laughing to Kenyon, on hearing "a Mr. Quillinan has been attacking me," that "his writings are, I hear, Quill-inanities." But there was no parallel in the attitudes. Landor did not even know Quillinan.

§ 2

During the two years following his separation from his family, Landor achieved the height of his literary fertility. Following the publication of *Pericles and Aspasia*, Saunders and Otley issued, in the spring of 1836, his *Letters of a Conservative*, "in which are shown the only means of saving what is left of the English Church"—an appeal for disestablishment and a reasoned indictment of the decadence of the clergy, which retains its force, with proportionately more pressing urgency, after a century. "Why is the Church of England the only national Church in Europe that is in a minority?" asked Landor, and answered,

"because the spiritual wants of the people were insufficiently supplied by the pastors engaged to tend them." He denied the right of bishops to sit in the House of Lords, or to own great wealth, "while clergymen of equal merit . . . live curates and die paupers." Asserting that "the whole service of the church is educative," he optimistically foresaw the time (still not arrived) "when every church in the world will be a schoolroom."

Saunders and Otley published *A Satire on Satirists* in December 1836. A sketch in *Blackwood's Magazine* of September, called *Alcibiades the Young Man,* taunted Landor with "developing under a plurality of names the uniform material of a very peculiar idiosyncrasy" in his "clever monopolydialogues," and he wrote to Milnes on 26th November:

> The worthies of Edinburgh have been attacking me. I never read a number of *Blackwood* in my life; this was told the editor, who has ragged me in some passages which were sent to me. Within next week you will have a copy, not of my answer, for I answer no man, but of a satire on these people and others somewhat better.

Two days earlier, he informed Lady Blessington, "My satire cost me five evenings, besides the morning (before breakfast), in which I wrote as much as you have about Wordsworth."

A pseudonymous squib on Irish Roman Catholic priests, called *Terry Hogan,* with a dissertation by its editor, "Phelim Octavius Quarle," was published by J. Wertheimer and Co. shortly before the *Satire,* and must have occupied little more labour. Apparently this publication escaped even the vigilant notice of Forster, but Landor evidently sent a copy to Crabb Robinson, who acknowledged that he had "received, or suspected I received, an amusing memorial of your enviable faculty of contemplating the follies of life with a free and cheerful aspect."

During his second winter in England he wrote *The Pentameron,* a work as exhausting as *Pericles and Aspasia,* and by the time of its appearance in the summer of 1837, he was busy on

High and Low Life in Italy, which ran serially in Leigh Hunt's *Monthly Repository* from August to the following April. He also contributed freely to anthologies and periodicals. Since the failure of his volume of collected poetry in 1831, he had declined to take himself seriously as a poet. "I was not born to be a poet," he wrote to Lady Blessington in 1834, and when she gave Samuel Carter Hall an introduction to him, in January 1837, with a view to obtaining "some memoranda, out of which to form a brief page of biography, to accompany specimens of modern Poets," he asked, "Is it possible that any one, excepting Southey, Forster, and James, can believe that I myself am a poet?" Nevertheless, many friends were eager to have short contributions from him, and finding short poems the easiest means to satisfy them, he developed the habit of writing occasional verse, maintaining an output unfailingly prolific to the end of his life.

He cultivated the vanity of boasting of his rapidity in poetic composition, possibly because he was aware of the unequal merit of his verse. *A Satire on Satirists* occupied only five days, and his dramas of *Andrea of Hungary* and *Giovanna of Naples*, he informed Lady Blessington, were written respectively in thirteen and eight days. But he evidently reckoned only the time actually spent at his desk, not counting the hours of meditation on his solitary walks, or during wakefulness at night. In 1858 he told Mrs. Lynn Linton, "As I always slept a little after dinner, I required less in bed and was never so perfectly awake as during the first hours of night." In those night hours he conceived much of his verse, committing it to his well-trained memory and writing it down on rising in the morning. Hence many of his feats "before breakfast," like the most famous of his quatrains, the "Dying Speech of an Old Philosopher." He told Forster that he wrote this on the night of his seventy-fourth birthday, after Dickens and Forster had dined with him, but Mrs. Lynn Linton, who was then staying with him, remembered how, the following morning, "at breakfast he would not touch his food until he had scrawled off the lines."

"As for my contributions of poetry, they are utterly worthless, and I seldom keep anything," he informed Milnes, who asked him, in November 1836, for a contribution to an annual published for charity by Lord Northampton: "What I do keep I send to Lady Blessington, having told her long ago that I would never publish anything before she had judged whether it were worth a place in any of her publications." This promise, made when Lady Blessington undertook the editorship of Heath's *Book of Beauty* with its issue for 1834, he so faithfully fulfilled that every volume of the annual for fourteen years, 1834 to 1847, contained contributions of his, verse or prose—sometimes both, as in the 1837 volume, which contained the "Farewell to Italy" verses and an imaginary conversation between "Colonel Walker, Hallaji, Gonda, Dewah." Milnes, however, obtained two poems for Lord Northamption's volume, *The Tribute*, and another charity publication, *Friendly Contributions for the Benefit of Three Infant Schools in the Parish of Kensington*, sponsored by Lady Mary Fox, received three from Landor, including *Death of Clytemnestra* and the lines addressed to his friend, Charles Elton. In 1837, Ablett printed for private circulation a miscellany called *Literary Hours*, "by Various Friends," which included many contributions from Landor, some of which, like the lines to Emma Isola and on Lamb's death, had lain some time in manuscript, some, like *A Mother's Tale*, and *Orestes Maddened*, had been recently offered to Lady Blessington but declined by her, probably as too long for her annual, while some, like the lines on Ablett's vacant tomb and to Mrs. Dashwood, were trifles treasured by the various friends.

The first of his many contributions to the *Examiner*, an imaginary conversation, "Eldon and Elcombe," appeared on 21st August 1836. In March this weekly journal had enthusiastically reviewed *Pericles and Aspasia*, and Landor, believing the review to have been written by the editor of the *Examiner*, Albany Fonblanque, sent it to his sisters for them to see "how magnificently the best writer in Europe has mentioned my

Pericles." He did not regard Fonblanque as "the best writer in Europe," but at sixty-one he was still seeking to impress upon his own family an appreciation of his genius, their refusal to recognise which had so exasperated him in his youth. One of the inducements offered by Lady Blessington, when persuading him to stay at Gore House, had been Fonblanque's eagerness to meet him; on meeting him, he discovered that, not Fonblanque, but his assistant, John Forster, had written the review.

Forster was only twenty-four at this time, but he belonged to the first generation of the golden age of individual enterprise. Without genius, money, or influence, but possessed of fine talents, immense energy, supreme self-confidence, and the insensitiveness of a rhinoceros, he was determined to make a successful career as a man of letters, and his method was to make friends and then make himself indispensable to them. Through Leigh Hunt, "the first distinguished man of letters I ever knew," he gained admittance to Charles Lamb's circle and a succession of journalistic jobs culminating in the appointment of literary and dramatic critic to the *Examiner*, on which journal, the leading Liberal Weekly, he was soon also sub-editor and general factotum. When he met Landor, he was already the valued friend and adviser on professional matters of Hunt, Macready, Sheridan Knowles, Procter, Talfourd, and Browning; soon he became the intimate of Harrison Ainsworth and Dickens, and successively literary adviser to Colburn and Bentley. "The Beadle of the Universe," Leigh Hunt's son, Thornton, aptly called him—"I cannot explain the secret of his influence over people," said Ainsworth; "he had a knack of making people do as he liked, whether they liked it or not." He offended many by his blunt, aggressive manner, and his friendships were freely chequered by tiffs, excited by his impetuous temper and dictatorial impatience. But his sincerity, his enthusiasm, his bustling energy, and, in Bulwer's phrase, "his strong practical sense and sound judgment," captured and held the confidence of his friends, who usually found him too useful to drop him.

Landor was a friend to be valued; it was useful to Forster to

be able to say that he was intimate with a writer of established reputation, so little known personally in the literary world. Prepared to like each other on meeting, since Forster admired Landor's work and Landor was pleased with his praise of *Pericles*, the liking was cemented by mutual usefulness. Introduced by Landor, Forster advanced his social ambitions by gaining access to Lady Blessington's *salon*, where he became a familiar figure. In return, he offered the *Examiner* as a platform for Landor's political comments, and while Lady Blessington continued to have first call on his verse, Forster became the inevitable receptacle of all his other writings. Following the Eldon-Elcombe dialogue, the "Audiences granted by the Emperor of China to Tsing-ti" appeared on 11th December in the *Examiner*, which, beginning on 29th January 1837, published a series of "Mr. Landor's Conservative Epistles on the Church," and sundry letters and verses during the year.

§ 3

When, as his literary executor, Forster came to write Landor's biography, he was fully conscious of the disadvantage, common to all biographers of a subject recently deceased, that there were still living friends and relatives likely to deprecate a frank statement of their relations with him. With characteristic directness, he therefore decided, as later in his *Life of Dickens*, to base his narrative on his one peculiar advantage—his personal knowledge of his subject. Both books evince the merits and defects of this treatment, and his *Life of Dickens* is as much superior to his *Life of Landor* as his personal knowledge and understanding of Dickens was superior to his personal knowledge and understanding of Landor. He knew Dickens intimately for the last thirty-three of the fifty-eight years of his life; his acquaintance with Landor was limited to twenty-two out of the last twenty-eight of his eighty-nine years. The fault of his *Life of Landor* lies in his interpretation of Landor's whole life ac-

cording to a personal knowledge of his declining years, a knowledge acquired in the course of a friendship with a man thirty-seven years his senior, whom he came to regard with the tolerance of a brisk young man of the world for the pleasant eccentricity of elderly genius.

Beginning in the year after Landor's separation from his family, Forster's acquaintance had not ripened sufficiently to intimacy for a first-hand knowledge of that affair. Even when their friendship had ripened, though Landor gave his fullest confidence in professional matters, a man of sixty does not readily confide his matrimonial troubles to a bachelor in his twenties, and Forster, as Dickens, his contemporary, afterwards discovered, had scant capacity for sympathetic understanding in spiritual and sexual problems. Considering that Landor's wife and children were still living when the biography appeared, though he suppressed much information at his disposal, Forster was admirably frank in presenting sufficient evidence for a fair assessment of the rights and wrongs of the separation. But, since he lacked Landor's personal confidence on the subject, his policy of relying on personal knowledge diminished almost to obliteration the true perspective of the separation in relation to Landor's subsequent life. Meeting Landor in company as a casual acquaintance, Forster found him charming, cheerful, boisterous in fun and enthusiasm, and this purely personal and superficial impression, in conjunction with an account of his restless literary activity, is the sole glimpse of Landor in these years afforded by Forster's book. So Colvin—who made no independent research, and whose monograph is mainly a polished commentary on Forster's facts—remarking on Landor's literary industry and that there was not "perceptible in the works so produced the shadow of any severe inward struggle or distress," was moved to ask:

> Did Landor then really . . . feel very deeply the breaking up of his beautiful Italian home or not? A few years before he could not bear his children to be out of his sight even for a day; did he suffer

as we should have expected him to suffer at his total separation from them now?

Examining the printed evidence with academic literalness and lack of imagination, Colvin concluded that, "a wrench once made, a tie once broken, he could accommodate himself without too much suffering to the change," and "the injury done to his children by leaving them subject to no discipline at such an age and in such surroundings, would appear hardly to have weighed on Landor's mind at all, and that it failed to do so is, I think, the most serious blot upon his character."

Such a conclusion on grounds so crumbled amounts to unwarranted aspersion; it is ironical that Landor, who so savagely resented injustice all his life, thus suffered posthumously from a biographer. But Colvin was most culpable in his complete indifference to the logic of psychology. "A wrench once made, a tie once broken"—yet did not Landor quarrel with and leave his young wife because he could not bear the mention of Llanthony? Did he not persist in his refusal ever to look on Llanthony again after he left England in 1814?

His exceptional literary activity after leaving Fiesole indicates his anguish of mind over parting from his children. He sought refuge in work, as he had done when his brother Robert found him busy with Latin verses "when we supposed him to be so miserable at Tours after parting with his wife." And all the time, while writing *Pericles*, the *Pentameron, High and Low Life in Italy*, he was discussing arrangements by which some share in his children might be restored to him.

Six months he had waited in Italy, hoping that Arnold and Julia might accompany him. He set aside nearly three-quarters of his income for his family, retaining for himself little more than two hundred pounds a year. In March 1836 he wrote to his brother Henry that he had declined a generous offer from "my kind friend Mrs. Dashwood," to pay off the £5000 annuity debt on his mother's estate, "on no other security than my honour and Arnold's." Since his arrival in England, some

of his Llanthony creditors, notably his former agent, Robbins, put in demands for prompt settlement of their debts, though they appear to have drawn neat incomes for twenty years in annual payments of interest. To realise ready money for these vultures, whose claims far exceeded anything he really owed, he sent to Fiesole for some of his pictures. A few were sold in London by Christie's "for less than twenty pounds;" as "the expenses of transport alone were eleven pounds eight," he reckoned that, "with packages & auction business I may put about four in my pocket." In consequence of this unsatisfactory result, he directed the other pictures to "be sent to any respectable auctioneer in Manchester, where I understand there is always a ready sale." Encouraged by Saunders and Otley's agreement for *Pericles*, he informed his brother, "I entertain no doubt that I shall be able to pay all my own expenses without one shilling from my property." He therefore proposed to allow his family £480 a year, besides "50 for the boys tutor, MacCarthy," and surrender the rest of his income to his creditors.

After spending a fortnight with Lady Blessington, he intended to accept "a very kind and flattering invitation to Ireland" from his old Florence acquaintance Normanby, now Lord Mulgrave. But news of his family changed his plans. Leaving London, he returned to Clifton whence, on 12th June, he enclosed to his brother Henry a letter he had received from William Sandford:

> He does not say perhaps all that he knows why Mr. MacCarthy should no longer be the tutor of my children. When I was in London, I think I could have obtained a situation for Arnold, but he has been persuaded by his mother that he stands above all authority of mine. I wish you would advise me what should be done, or *can* be. When I think of my family it almost drives me mad, for whatever I have at any time projected or ordered has been systematically overthrown. I have been obliged to give Sandford the most convincing reasons that I never can in future live under the same roof with my wife.
>
> She knows that it was out of consideration for my children

Julia in particular, that I endured her conduct so long, and might (she thought) do so longer. However it suited her purpose to render my home intolerable, and she fancied my extreme love to the children would bring me back again at any convenient season.

I am sorry that Julia has observed what it was impossible she should not observe, sooner or later. My friend Hare and his wife have also written to me, and have done every thing in their power to save my family from utter destruction. But their mother will not allow Julia to go to Mrs. Hare, because Mrs. H did not think it proper to invite her too. . . . I hope it may be thought expedient to pay Macarthy 25 £ for his half year and dismiss him at once. Arnold can grow no worse with him or without him. But I distrust my judgement in every thing, and indeed have none left.

During the first six months after his leaving Fiesole, his friends had sought to persuade Mrs. Landor to allow the two elder children to accompany their father to England, while the two younger remained with her. But Mrs. Landor used the same weapons of hysterical tantrums to prevail upon Arnold and Julia, as she had used for years to coerce Landor. She refused to part with any of her children, and intimidated by her hysterical threats, the two elder declined to leave their mother. Landor was thus confronted with a plain choice—either he must return to his wife, or resign forever the company of his children.

To Forster, Landor's objections to returning to his wife seemed "very far from insuperable." Landor himself recognised that this view would be generally adopted, and at this time he added an apposite passage to the imaginary conversation between Andrew Marvel and Bishop Parker, which had been recovered, with the other lost manuscripts, from N. P. Willis by Lady Blessington.

Marriage is the metempsychosis of women; . . . it turns them into different creatures from what they were before. Liveliness in the girl may have been mistaken for good temper; the little pervicacity which at first is attractively provoking, at last provokes without its attractiveness; negligence of order and propriety, of duties and civilities, long endured, often deprecated, ceases to be

tolerable, when children grow up and are in danger of following the example. It often happens that, if a man unhappy in the married state were to disclose the manifold causes of his uneasiness, they would be found, by those who were beyond their influence, to be of such a nature as rather to excite derision than sympathy. The waters of bitterness do not fall on his head in a cataract, but through a colander; one however like the vases of the Danaides, perforated only for replenishment. We know scarcely the vestibule of a house of which we fancy we have penetrated into all the corners. We know not how grievously a man may have suffered, long before the calumnies of the world befell him as he reluctantly left his house-door. There are women from whom incessant tears of anger swell forth at imaginary wrongs; but of contrition for their own delinquencies, not one.

Foreseeing that his family would query his justification for leaving his wife, he obtained Armitage Brown's written evidence; he found himself "obliged to give Sandford the most convincing reasons," and he had to repeat them to his brother Henry, to whom he wrote again on 15th June. Stating his conviction that his wife would not give up the children—"she swore she never would"—and how for years she had locked her bedroom door against him, he went on:

She has called me for an hour together, twice or thrice a week villain, coward, etc. etc. *always* in the presence of my servants. She never in her life expostulated with me on any thing that displeased her, but always waited to abuse and insult me in the presence of others. You have seen what Mr Brown wrote. Mr Hutton once took me by the hand and said he did not believe I had so much patience &c. &c., yet he had often seen me *nearly* equally insulted. Nothing was ever so much my desire as to conceal the misconduct of my wife, for the sake of my children.

To have removed them would have exposed her at once, yet their good seemed to require it. The only favor I ever asked of her was, to treat me with as much gentleness as the lowest of the servants, and to tell me when I had offended her, without unbecoming language, and without their presence.

On Thursday (tomorrow sennight) I will go to London, and set out for the continent within two or three days after. Never will I venture into Tuscany, nor see her face again if I can help it.

I have written to Johnstone the banker to devise some means of conveying the children to me without her, and not to furnish her with the means of molesting me. I suspect at last she will keep my children from me, and the winter will whiten my bones among the Alpes.

He had been much upset by another letter from Florence, received since Sandford's, from G. P. R. James, who wrote: "I wish to Heaven Julia were with you. It would be a comfort to you and a blessing to her; for Italy, and Italy without a father's care, is a sad land for young fair woman." He instructed his cousin and agent, Walter Landor, through whom he henceforth communicated with his wife, to send her a transcript of James's letter, so that "she will see that all my friends wish my children in England," and asked his brother, "If you would write a few lines to my dearest Julia, telling her how necessary and how desired her presence is in England, she would leave Italy with less regret, and would not have to hear that it is all my madness, the usual expression, and not always so far from the truth."

At the end of June he set out for the continent, travelling up the Rhine to Heidelberg, where he remained three months, waiting vainly for his children to join him. He heard from Johnstone, his Florence banker, that "Arnold was much affected by the remonstrances of Mrs. Dashwood, who ordered Johnstone to supply him with whatever money he wanted for his journey." But, on 2nd October, he received from his son a letter "doing me the favor to invite me back to Italy." He replied:

Arnold, I would not be thought so unpolite as to defer the expression of my gratitude, for your permission to return to what was formerly my home, and for your promise that every thing shall be forgotten. Alas, Arnold, too much has been forgotten. Do you hate a father because he cannot bear the dishonour of his family? do you despise a gentleman because he avoids the endurance of worse language than the vilest rabble indulge in? I do not appeal to your justice; I appeal to your memory. Have I not often been obliged to leave the room rather than reply how-

ever moderately? You may dislike Mr. Leckie . . . yet he told your Aunt Rose that he would not have born for half an hour what I have been bearing for a quarter of a century. And did not Mr. Hutton say 'I really give you credit: I did not believe you had so much patience'? I have Mr. Brown's testimony, and some others. Is it not strange that the only person that treats me with indignity, is the person who made oath in the presence of God, to treat me very differently? And is this the worst? I shall leave behind me proofs to the contrary. I shall show that I shut my eyes, not because they were blind or weak, but from tenderness to my family. The man who is living in health and hope may write and speak rashly, but he who knows he is going before God, will not go before him with falsehood and malice. I have loved all of you most fondly, and without distinction. Some of you may be taught that you have no right or reason to treat me as a father. I have every day of my life wished to see my family and have now made one last effort to save it. I am incapable of more. Two painful and violent disorders the eresipelas and cholera, came rapidly over me. Either of them, at my age, would be enough to prepare me for the inevitable hour. God grant it may come soon. My bagage is taken on board the steamer, and I find myself strong enough to undertake the voyage. I do not desire you to return me any part of the love I have incessantly borne toward you, nor to observe the courtesies of society in my favour. But I think it is my duty to recall your attention to what you must have observed in me, and to consider how moderate a share of human infirmities are attributable to me, when rancour is forced back half a lifetime for some trivial subject of invective. At last I was accused of vile hypocrisy in *seeming* kind and attentive at the bed of sickness, I whom the cry of any animal pierces with pity! Arnold, permit me to call myself, perhaps for the last time, your affectionate father W. S. Landor.

The dignity and deserved rebuke of this letter can hardly be disputed; remembering Landor's natural impetuosity of temper, its restraint is remarkable. Even the self-pity of the latter part, with its suggestion of seeking effect in a tragic pose, may be excused by the bitterness of his disappointment after three months of waiting and his condition of illness. His agony of mind induced a bout of feverishness, and he wrote to his brother Henry from Clifton on 9th October:

My forehead felt again the same pains, as when my eresypelas first came on. I took a large dose of physick and went to bed, until a hot bath could be prepared. I then remained perspiring violently and no return of eresypelas. However I kept my bed, without eating, til the steamer was about to leave Manheim. I went aboard and grew much better. I could not however carry my sadness into Lady Blessington's so I slept at Ibbotson's Hotel, and sett out for this place in the morning.

From Ibbotson's Hotel he wrote to Lady Blessington:

I arrived here in such utter disarray, and so vilely out of spirits, in the dark, that I could not in my conscience present myself at Gore House. . . . Early to-morrow morning I must go to Clifton, where I have been expected these last four days. . . . I returned quite alone—the cholera is the plea why none of my children were allowed to meet me in Tyrol. To-morrow I shall roll myself up like a hedgehog for six months.

Declining a renewed invitation from the Mulgraves to Ireland, he settled for the winter at Penrose Cottage, Clifton, and sought forgetfulness of sorrow in work, writing *A Satire on Satirists* and dispatching it to Saunders and Otley within a fortnight of his return.

Still cherishing the illusion that he might make enough to keep himself by writing, he proposed to his brother Henry that his family should have £450 a year, while the rest of his income—forgetting that he had already suggested its allotment to his creditors—he intended to accumulate for the benefit of his three younger children, as Arnold was heir to his estates.

I do not know whether I am capable of writing long together, but I think I can get about a hundred pounds a year by it, or more, so that in future, indeed always from this time forth, I shall want nothing from my estate.

The illusion was quickly dispelled by a letter from Saunders and Otley, declining to publish *A Satire on Satirists*, as they had lost £150 on *Pericles*. With his usual grand indifference to money, Landor replied:

Gentlemen, you judge very rightly in supposing that nothing of mine can be popular. I regret that for the present you are subject to a considerable loss by the *Pericles.* I never can allow anyone to be a loser by me, on which principle (if on no other) I would never play a game at cards. Perhaps a few more copies, though probably very few, may be sold within another year. At all events, at the end of the next, I will make good your loss. I am also in your debt for the *Letters of a Conservative,* which have lately been reviewed in Germany by Dr. Paulus. But in England they do not appear to be worth the notice of the learned world, or the political. Be pleased to let me know what I am in your debt for the publication and the books you sent me, that I may discharge this portion of it immediately.

Not unnaturally, Forster found this quixotry "remarkable," but he was still more amazed when, three years later, Landor had utterly forgotten the transaction, and declaring heatedly that he had published *Pericles and Aspasia* on his own account, was only prevented from substantiating the supposed loss a second time by a reassuring letter from the publishers themselves. Explaining his forgetfulness to Forster, he remarked that "never in my lifetime have I kept any accounts," a fact with which Gabell, Robbins and the other Llanthony sparks must have been well acquainted before submitting their claims.

Enclosing a copy of his epistle to Saunders and Otley, he wrote to Lady Blessington:

> I now rejoice that I reserved for my own expenditure only 200 a year, and that I have not deprived my wife of her horses nor my sons of theirs, nor of anything else they had been used to. I never feel great pleasure in doing what anybody else can do. It would puzzle a good many to save 50 out of 200 in one year. The rest must come out of my estate, which I am clearing of its encumbrances very fast.

Thus airily he forgot in the space of a fortnight his plan of earning a living from his pen and taking nothing from his estate, and four years later his brothers Charles and Henry were still discussing schemes with their Rugeley cousin to reduce the encumbrances on the estate. Nor did he permanently avoid

depriving his family of their horses; after Arnold's visit to his father in 1842, writing to Henry Landor on re-arrangements of the estate income, the Rugeley cousin noted, "Mrs. Landor to be allowed 500 £ a year instead of 400 £, so that she may resume the carriage, & Arnold a hack, which they laid down when your Brother withdrew 100 £ a year because Arnold would not come to England."

In the new year of 1837, Landor's anxiety about his daughter was intensified by a letter from Arnold, informing him that their distant cousin, Edward Willson Landor, was making advances to her. A somewhat unsatisfactory young man of twenty-six, Edward had stayed at Fiesole in 1835, when he was so attracted to Julia that, as he explained to Landor in a long letter pleading his suit on 4th February 1837, "nothwithstanding the warmth of friendship I met in your house, I resolved to quit it hastily."

I should probably have continued to obey the dictates of prudence, & for ever have shunned her society, had not the most horrible thoughts been excited in my breast & in those of most of your relations by your reports of the disorderly conduct of your wife and family during your absence. I conceived with others, that your daughter though untainted herself was living within the sphere of contamination and who is there so ungenerous, so contemptible that would not make every effort to withdraw purity from the foul atmosphere, which I was led to believe she inhaled? Your two younger sons were absolutely running wild, uncontrolled, & uninstructed in the necessary lesson of self-government; and no one could see a whole family so left to themselves, & left to ruin, without striving in some way to aid them, however dangerous might be the essay to himself. I went to Florence & did all in my power to induce your family to repair to England.

He enclosed a girlish letter from Julia, asking her father's consent to her engagement —"do not think that time can alter my sentiments," she warned him; "when once I have given my whole heart unreservedly, neither time nor distance can make me change"—and he promised, if Landor agreed to the engagement, he would undertake not to see her for two years.

Edward Landor was not a suitor to be welcomed. Three years before, his uncle, Walter of Rugeley, had generously given him a junior partnership in his attorney's practice, not because he was greatly disposed in his favour, but because "by the time my eldest boy is Edward's age, I shall be in my dotage or my grave." Sarcastically he told Henry Landor that he had doubted the young man's acceptance of the offer, since he had "a mind much superior to that of a 'Country Attorney' & a most independent spirit," and was "in great danger of becoming a scribbler for magazines." But Edward had shown gallantry and initiative in going to Florence, and Landor might have been well advised to consent to a provisional engagement as a means of conveying his daughter to England. Unluckily, before Edward could approach him, he was informed of the affair by Arnold, who evidently disapproved of his cousin's attentions to his sister, and pathetically eager to see cause for applauding some conduct of his eldest son, he exclaimed enthusiastically at Arnold's dutiful conduct and accused Edward of "baseness" in tampering with Julia's affections in her father's absence. Edward's "independent spirit" prompted a tactlessly aggressive tone, which ruined his chances. He did not persevere in his profession, but sometime later emigrated to Australia, whence he wrote to Forster thirty years afterwards. Not yet seventeen, Julia was unlikely long to repine, but even an early and unwise marriage would have been better than her actual unhappy fate.

The incident inspired further efforts by Landor to bring his children to England. Visiting Fiesole with Wordsworth in the following June, Crabb Robinson wrote, "I am sure you are wanted at home, and that your presence might have the happiest effect on the characters of your children. It might be decisive as to the happiness of your daughter." Such well-meaning busybodies as Robinson rather hindered than helped Landor's efforts, for their ignorance of his reasons for leaving his wife, and their assumption that only his obstinate temper prevented his return, encouraged Mrs. Landor in the hope that his friends' persuasions and his anxiety about the children would force his

capitulation. But Landor was determined not to live with her again and risk the possibility of exciting the children's contempt for both parents. When his brother-in-law Ravenshaw appealed to him to return, he gave the same reasons for not doing so as he had given to Sandford and his brother Henry, and Ravenshaw frankly admitted their soundness. With all his wife's family, he remained on friendly terms, and five years later, when Colonel Stopford, husband of Landor's favourite among his wife's sisters, Laura, returned to England from South America, he introduced him to Lady Blessington, asking her help for his plans of developing "the richest mines in America, which are his property."

Francis Hare and Mrs. Dashwood worked most effectively on his behalf. In November 1837 Mrs. Dashwood informed Landor's sister Elizabeth that the whole family would come over in the following April to a house he had taken at Plymouth, where Armitage Brown was living, while Landor himself was to occupy lodgings close by. He informed Hare of his agreement to this arrangement, "on condition that I never see her." Apparently this condition was made an excuse for quashing the arrangement, Arnold resenting the slight to his mother, and in consequence, Landor deducted a hundred pounds from the family's annual allowance. Mrs. Landor had no illusions about her incapacity adequately to supervise the children's upbringing, and as late as 1839, she made overtures, through Kenyon and Aubrey Bezzi, for Landor's return to Fiesole, which he curtly refused.

Excess of generosity was the worst blame attachable to Landor. If he had insisted on selling the property at Fiesole, he could have compelled his family's return to England. He had at first intended to sell, for he wrote to his brother Henry from Heidelberg on 15th July 1836:

> Mr. Ablett has heard quite sufficient of the irregularities of my wife and the ingratitude and wickedness of her son, to leave nothing to the justice of such persons. He would never have accepted from me one farthing of principal or interest, but he has no reason,

now I am driven out of my house, to leave it in the possession of the present occupants. I have written to my cousin Walter to advertise the house, furniture and pictures. To sell the pictures, the finest collection any Englishman ever made in Italy, breaks my heart. But go they must. I gave Arnold all that was mine, I could not give him what is anothers. . . . I do not want anything. I can live on bread and milk, and could be contented to see no other face upon earth than my children's.

Apparently his pride incited a change of intention; he would not have it said that he had caused his family to conform with his wishes against their will. His eldest son, to whom he had quixotically devised the entire income of his estates, apart from his own allowance and his wife's, evinced no such sensitive delicacy, and used his independent position to demand his father's return to his mother. After the failure of the Plymouth project, Landor addressed to him the verses published in the *Examiner* of 14th October 1838, beginning "Arnold! thou wert a lovely child!" and ending;

> Arnold! thy breast was tender then!
> Ah why, so slightly verst with men,
> Avoids it now the holy ties
> Of all our early sympathies?
> I am not cross, I am not cold,
> My heart . . . it never can grow old. . . .
> The tears fast falling from my cheek
> Are signs for words I will not speak.

"I was moved to tears the other day, on reading in 'The Examiner' your lines to Arnold," wrote Lady Blessington: "If he reads them, how can he resist flying to you?" In a letter of the same year to Lady Blessington, Landor wrote:

I heard from Florence not long ago, but nothing from that quarter is likely to give me pleasure or composure. I wish I could utterly forget all connected with it. But the waves of oblivion dash against my Tuscan terraces, and the spray reaches my family, and blinds the eyes that should be turned towards me, for other waters fill my heart with bitterness.

CHAPTER XI

LONDON AND BATH

§ 1

ACCOMPANIED BY HIS SON, Southey visited Landor at Clifton in the first week of November 1836. He was suffering affliction worse than Landor's, for two years before, his wife, to whom he was devoted, had been removed to a lunatic asylum. But the two friends found the same charm in each other's society as of old, and spent "several delightful days" together, visiting the haunts of Southey's Bristol boyhood. Charles Elton's fifteen-year-old daughter, Jane, later the wife of W. H. Brookfield and the romance in Thackeray's life, was bowling her hoop along Royal Crescent, when she met Landor and Southey walking together—Southey "in an old-fashioned spencer, his hair tied behind in *queue* style, with a black ribbon."

"By living at Clifton, I am grown as rich as Rothschild," wrote Landor to Lady Blessington in December 1836; "if Count D'Orsay could see me in my new coat, he would not write me so pressingly to come up to London." Still seriously trying to live on two hundred a year, which his trustees soon insisted on increasing to four hundred, he became notorious for the shabbiness of his snuff-coloured clothes. "He never bought any new clothes," said young Augustus Hare, "and a chimney-sweep would have been ashamed to wear his coat, which was always the same as long as I knew him, though it in no way detracted from his majestic and lion-like appearance." Lady Bul-

wer, however, remarked that Landor in the daytime, wearing "his old gabardine of a brown surtout, shining at the seams, and often minus some buttons," looked very different from "the thoroughbred, noble-headed, distinguished-looking man . . . when dressed for dinner."

At Clifton he became intimate with Charles Elton, a man three years his junior, who succeeded to his father's baronetcy in 1842, and with whom he had been acquainted in their youth. Elton was a classical scholar of distinction, and they "delighted in reciting alternate stanzas from Homer" together. But Elton had a large and merry family of children, three boys and eight girls, and more for their society than their father's Landor went so often that, writing their news to their eldest brother, the girls would note, "nothing occurred—only Old Landor called oftener than ever." "He would come in at about dinner time, six o'clock, when he would ask leave to sit in the room, without dining, as he preferred to go home to a later dinner," and taking an easy chair, would "talk delightfully without causing the least restraint or inconvenience." He chose as his favourites the two youngest girls, who were most nearly the age of his own daughter, and Jane Elton wrote:

> He was most kind and sympathetic to us all though he singled out me and my sister Mary at that early age to tell us he had troubles. One day he said he had left a drawer full of Southey's letters at home—letters he had treasured and intended to keep, but "My wife has been so good as to burn them," and he gave the loudest burst of laughter I ever heard.

When one of the girls consulted him about a short story she had written, he obtained for her five pounds for it from Lady Blessington, who published it in the *Book of Beauty*.

The Eltons moved their home from Clifton to Southampton in the autumn of 1837, and Mary Elton wrote to her sister: "Mr. Landor says it will make him melancholy to pass by our terrace, so he will not return to Clifton." But the absence of a dearer friend than the Eltons inspired Landor's sudden distaste for Clif-

ton, of which he had written to Southey on his return from Heidelberg, "here I think I shall finish my days; the climate suits my health so perfectly." Ianthe was living at Clifton when he went there from Llanbedr early in 1836; it was she by whom he had "been expected these last four days" when he paused only one night in London on his return from Heidelberg, and to whom he hurried for comfort in his wretchedness. For the rest of her life, Landor contrived to live near her whenever she was in England, first at Clifton, then at Bath. This intimacy he sacredly kept from most of his friends, but he referred to her when writing to Forster how "every autumn I save something, because, in the months of December and January, I give to poor families half the income of those two months. A person unerring in her judgment and boundless in her goodness helps me to find them out." Throughout the twenty-two years of his residence at Bath, he practised a habit of unobtrusive charity. At Christmas 1844 he asked Rose Paynter:

> Have you any old pensioners who are looking out for you? If you have, appoint me your almoner. I have kept some money on purpose. This month and the next, I am resolved to spend on myself only half my large income. My heart sinks and aches every time I go out of doors, such is the misery of the poor.

Always he had felt sympathy with the sufferings of the poor. In 1812 when wartime prices were at their height and he informed Southey that "three pounds of miserable bread cost two shillings at Abergavenny," he was touched by the distresses of the Llanthony peasantry in spite of their malicious treatment of himself—"the poor barbarous creatures in my parish have actually ceased to be mischievous, they are so miserable." Forty-two years later, in 1854, he excused himself to Forster for visiting London more rarely: "I too often think at night of what I had been seeing in the morning, poor mothers, half-starved children, and girls habitually called unfortunate by people who drop the word as lightly as if it had no meaning in it. . . . So many heart-aches always leave me one."

In the spring of 1837, he visited Ablett at Llanbedr, before going in May to Lady Blessington at Gore House and in June to his sisters at Warwick; in August, he stayed with Kenyon at Torquay, "the loveliest place, next to Clifton, in all Europe," where he first met Theodosia Garrow, afterwards Tom Trollope's first wife, and where Armitage Brown spent a week with him. After accompanying Brown to his home near Plymouth for a few days, he recoiled from the prospect of spending the winter at Clifton without Ianthe, who had gone to stay at Vienna with her Austrian daughter-in-law. "I have a great love for Clifton," he wrote to Southey on 18th September, "yet I cannot endure the sight of flowers or fields where I had ever spent pleasurable hours. So, instead of Clifton, I think I shall go to Bath in the middle of next month."

At Bath he found lodgings at No. 1, St. James's Square. After more than thirty years, he found Lady Belmore and her sister, Bess Caldwell, still queens of society; they "presided over the dances" at the Assembly Rooms, where Landor now saw Rose and Sophy Paynter enjoying such admiration as Ianthe had received in the old days. These girls—especially Rose, in whom he saw the living likeness of her aunt, Rose Aylmer—succeeded the Elton sisters as the substitutes to satisfy his longing for his absent daughter. He became the privileged intimate of the Paynter's family circle, and her visit to Paris in the following year commenced a correspondence with Rose Paynter which continued unbroken through the remaining twenty-five years of his life.

He found an intellectual crony in Colonel William Napier, later a general and a K.C.B., who was then writing his monumental *History of the Peninsular War*. Married to a niece of Charles James Fox, Napier disagreed with Landor's estimate of that statesman, but shared most of his other political views, avowing an outspoken radicalism incongruous with his age and class. In illustration of his democratic views it was said that when a rustic labourer stood politely aside to allow one of Napier's attractive daughters to pass, her father abused her for

getting in the man's way. With his usual prejudice in friendship, Landor not only reckoned Napier "the greatest historian of our age," but remarked in 1855 that he had "never known more than two *great* men, although many good ones—Napier and Kossuth." He idolised as a hero William Napier's elder brother, Sir Charles James Napier, the conqueror of Sind, rating him even above Wellington as "the only truly wise general of our times," and expressed violent indignation over the difference over military reform with the viceroy Dalhousie, causing Napier's retirement as commander-in-chief in India, writing verses on "A Back-Biter" beginning:

> If thou wert only foul and frowsy,
> If only itchy, only lousy,
> Bold men might take thy hand, Dalhousie!

To the Napier brothers he addressed many verses, the least ornamental and most forceful appearing in *Dry Sticks:*

> One brother closed the Scindian war,
> The other the Peninsular:
> One bore his painful wounds few years,
> The other his thro' fifty bears.
> Each, who abroad had overcome
> His foes, encountered worse at home.
> England! are such rewards for these
> Who won and wrote thy victories?

With the Napier family he became a favourite, and when William Napier left Bath in 1842 to become lieutenant-governor of Guernsey and one of the daughters wrote affectionately to him, he exclaimed delightedly, "I do really think one or two of them would even give up a flirtation for five minutes to write to me or converse with me."

But the Paynters and Napiers could not compensate him for Ianthe's absence, and when she wrote in May 1838, deferring her return from Austria, he appealed to her in verse:

Ianthe! Since our parting day
Pleasure and you were far away.
Leave you then all that strove to please
In proud Vienna's palaces,
To soothe your Landor's heart agen,
And roam once more our hazel glen? . . .
You sate beside me on that stone,
Rather (not much) too wide for one: . . .
Ianthe, come! ere June declines
We'll write upon it all these lines.

Ianthe's company was his greatest comfort, and her influence, her good sense and Irish humour, may have been responsible for keeping him out of litigious and personal quarrels, though she could not prevent his implication in an occasional literary skirmish.

Doubtless at Lady Belmore's he renewed acquaintance with Lady Bulwer, who had separated from her husband after the tour on which they had visited Landor at Fiesole. Landor had not greatly liked Bulwer, and his wife being pleasantly disposed as well as pretty, he readily lent an ear to the tale of injuries she professed to have suffered from her husband. It happened that he was much impressed by the work of a young painter, William Fisher, who justified his opinion by later becoming an R.A. Fisher painted three portraits of him—of one Southey said "the picture was as good as the likeness"—as well as one of Rose Paynter, which Landor persuaded Lady Blessington to reproduce in the *Book of Beauty* with some appropriate verses of his own, and one of Kenyon. Thinking to do Fisher a further service, he asked Lady Bulwer to sit for him, which she affectedly consented to do, "upon the express proviso that he (Landor) should always be there at the sittings, so that I might either listen or talk during the penance, and not die of ennui." The intimacy thus established inspired her with the desire to dedicate to him her first novel, *Cheveley*, which appeared in 1839.

Such a compliment was no novelty to Landor; as he remarked with characteristic prejudice, "the best poem and al-

most the best novel of our days, were dedicated to me—'Kehama' by Southey and 'Attila' by James"—and he was gratified in the summer of 1838 by Armitage Brown's cordial tribute in the dedication of his edition of Shakespeare's sonnets. But he would certainly have acepted this attention with pleasure, if he had not heard from a London friend—almost certainly Forster, from whom the publishing world held no secrets—that Lady Bulwer's novel was primarily a vicious attack on her husband, with Lady Blessington and Forster himself also satirised under thin disguises, and she obviously intended her dedication to achieve sensation by scandalous gossip about the analogy of her separation from her husband to Landor's from his wife. Evidently Landor had listened sympathetically to her confidences, doubtless expressing indignation against Bulwer's treatment of her, and had received her sympathy on his own account, for he afterwards expressed the pious resolution that "for the remainder of my life I will keep aloof from the concerns of others. The little good I can do without effort and without inconvenience I will do—nothing more." He had, however, no previous suspicion that he was to be lured into a public parade of his private afflictions, and he might have been excused some expression of indignation. But chivalry forbade anything but courtesy to a woman, and he wrote "to entreat your patience," explaining how "I have been *implored* by those whose happiness and contentment I feel myself most especially bound to consult, 'never to allow my name to be implicated in matters of such delicacy'." He went on to relate how he had "destroyed, with my own hands, the most elaborate of my works"—this being his political history of his own times, begun at Florence, which he records, in *Letters of a Conservative,* having destroyed because his exposure of living statesmen might "serve for the indulgence of ill-humour and the excitement of malignity"—"lest it might disquiet the peace of my mother, then in perfect health," and concluded: "Do not imagine, dear Lady Bulwer, that I consider the expression of your friendship as a light and valueless distinction: I trust I shall be worthy of retaining it, and not the

less for the sacrifice of my pride to the sacredness of my affections." The reply was intrinsically feline:

> Dear Mr Landor, You need not fear. The Dedication shall be with pleasure withdrawn, as I dislike Dedications at all times, and should be sorry to compromise you, even in the moral and virtuous atmosphere of Gore House. I remain (privately) Your sincere friend, R. Lytton-Bulwer.

Needless to add, the acquaintance there ended. But Lady Bulwer's malice survived forty-four years, for she published in 1883 a skittishly flippant magazine article of her "reminiscences" of Landor, discreetly suppressing any reference to the dedication, but depicting him as a talented buffoon, delighting to exercise his wit on dullards. Mrs. Paynter appears as "Mrs. Avenel, who had two beautiful daughters, and a hobbledehoy of a son," and Landor's favourite butts are said to have been the son, Fred Paynter, and a poet engaged on a work which "had taken him twenty years to *conceive*." Her anecdotes had sufficient foundation in fact to lend venom to her malice. Telling Lady Blessington that the poet, John Edmund Reade, was "about to publish a drama on the Deluge, on which he tells me he has been engaged for twenty years," Landor wrote, "you cannot be surprised that he is grievously and hopelessly afflicted, having had water on his brain so long." But he poked fun at the poetaster without any of the sadistic glee suggested by Lady Bulwer, and his mention of Reade to Lady Blessington was incidental to his offering a kindness in introducing him as a possible contributor to the *Book of Beauty*. Probably he was also the good-natured means of introducing him to Macready, who waxed indignant against "that ludicrously wretched fellow, Mr. E. Reade," who "endeavoured to *bribe* me, by a promise of dedicating his miserable play to me, to act it."

Obviously Landor would not have considered cruel baiting of her brother as a means of recommending himself to Rose Paynter's friendship. Having arrived at uncomfortable adolescence, Fred Paynter was inclined to give himself airs and excite

anxiety for his future in his mother and sisters, and Landor adopted the habit of laughing and joking to rouse him from his sulky self-consciousness. Writing to his absent sister in January 1839 that "Fred has come sometimes to visit me in the evening," he assured her that she would find him improved; "he is extremely amiable as well as clever, and is only in want of occupation." His prediction that young Paynter would be distinguished, "particularly if his profession should be the army," hardly had chance of fulfilment, since he died young on active service in India; meanwhile he humoured the young man's poetic ambitions, congratulating him six years later on losing "a little of his admiration for Byron," in whom "there is much to admire, but nothing to imitate."

§ 2

Landor never had the erratic habits of the eccentric; his life was always ordered with the regularity of the egoist who resents disturbance of his privacy. As a young man he had wintered at Bath and visited London in the social season; for many years in Italy, he had wintered at Florence and taken a country house in the hills for the summer months; now he resumed the habit of his bachelor days, residing at Bath from September till May, when he went up to London and thence to various parts of the country on visits to friends. He broke his habit for the sake of Francis Hare, with whom he went to stay in December 1838 at his Berkshire home, Westwood Way House, an old house built by Inigo Jones, which he said "would have done passably well for Naples, and better for Timbuctoo"—"the cold was intense, and I slept in a bed large enough for a company of comedians."

On his sixty-third birthday, 30th January 1838, Forster was staying with him, and "with hardly an intermission for the next twenty years" visited him on his birthday—often in the company of Charles Dickens, who was introduced by Forster to

Landor during his summer visit to London in 1838. The author of *Pickwick* and *Oliver Twist*, Dickens was enjoying the first flush of success—two years before, as an unknown, he had not been among the company at the first night of *Ion*—and Landor immediately gave him the generous praise which he always accorded to his juniors. "Tell him," he wrote to Forster in 1839 while *Nicholas Nickleby* was appearing serially, "he has drawn from me more tears and more smiles than are remaining to me for all the rest of the world, real or ideal," and asking Rose Paynter at Christmas 1844 if she had enjoyed *The Chimes*, he exclaimed, "Wonderful man! Everything he writes is in the service of Humanity. His Genius was sent from Heaven to scatter good and wisdom upon the earth." Though Dickens had only twelve years to live when Landor last saw him and was then worn and prematurely aged by the burden of unhappy marriage, he remained to Landor the charming, buoyant, almost boyish young man self-described in *David Copperfield*. Between them grew the affection, based on mutual admiration, too rare between men of different generations; for such affection and reverence from his juniors as Landor received from Dickens, Forster and Browning, and such generous praise, encouragement, and easy comradeship as he gave to inspire those feelings, it is necessary to look back a century and a half to Dryden and the young wits collected round him at Wills's coffee-house. In this, Landor acted up to his classical ideal, behaving to his juniors in reality as in fancy he conceived himself as Anaxagoras in *Pericles and Aspasia*.

Dickens's home became, after 1840, second only to Gore House as a haven of hospitality for Landor in London. He made a special journey after Christmas 1841 to be present as godfather at the christening of one of Dickens's children, and when Dickens visited Italy in 1844, he wrote the verses, which Forster printed in the *Examiner*, containing the wistful lines:

> Ah! could my steps in life's decline
> Accompany or follow thine!

But my own vines are not for me
To prune, or from afar to see.
I miss the tales I used to tell
With cordial Hare and joyous Gell.

To think of Dickens and Forster posting down from London to Bath to celebrate their old friend's birthday recalls to the imagination how Congreve and Southerne drove out some stages up the Great North Road to meet Dryden returning from Northamptonshire, and renews some belief in the finer feelings of men. When Dickens visited Bath after Landor's death, he wrote to Forster, "Landor's ghost goes along the silent streets before me. . . . The place looks to me like a cemetery which the Dead have succeeded in rising and taking."

Southey, Crabb Robinson, and Kenyon visited Landor shortly before Christmas 1838, and when Kenyon informed him that Southey intended marrying a second time, his first reaction was that, since he had "been married once, and happily. . . . I think I should have liked him rather the better had he been contented to stop short of matrimony." Even then he added, "However, he is a more judicious and a better man than I am, and I trust his choice will be conducive to his happiness." And a few months later, when Southey had explained that he had known Caroline Bowles for twenty years, "that there is a just proportion between their ages, and that, having but one daughter single, and being obliged to leave her frequently, she wants a friend and guide at home," he exclaimed, "Nothing is more reasonable, nothing more considerate and kind," adding, "Love has often made other wise men less wise, and sometimes other good men less good; but never Southey, the most perfect of mortals, at least of men mortals."

The unbroken friendship of thirty-five years was drawing to its close. Southey never recovered from the mental illness and death of his first wife, and Miss Bowles's four years of married life were spent in anxious nursing of an invalid. The fine intellect, trained to mechanical precision through years of incessant

toil to provide for his own family and Coleridge's, broke down under the stress of sorrow. The machine ceased to function; unable to work, he at first found pleasure in reading, but soon his comprehension failed to absorb what he read, and he wandered aimlessly, a pathetic, decrepit figure, up and down his magnificent library, wistfully admiring his books, taking them down and replacing them upon the shelves. The release came in March 1843, on hearing of which Landor wrote the lines published the same week in the *Examiner*. Appropriately lines by Wordsworth were engraved on the memorial in Crosthwaite Church, but an epitaph by Landor, published in the *Examiner* of 4th November 1843, was rejected by those responsible for that at Southey's Bristol birthplace, though he had suggested it to the municipal authorities and had started the fund with a subscription of twenty pounds.

Southey's illness left little of his small savings. Landor had never met his widow, though she had regularly sent him reports during the long illness, but hearing that she had lost half her small income by her marriage, he immediately took up her cause. Finding Southey's relatives unhelpful, he appealed to Milnes's influence to obtain her a pension; he emphasised her personal virtues, but "not her merits, but his, call upon the nation for some testimonial—a very small pension for a very few years (I fear I am over-rating its duration) would exonerate the country from its debt of honour, and save from destitution the widow of that man who in our times has done it the most honour. . . . If you cannot obtain for the widow of the wisest and most virtuous man in England what will defend her from poverty, I swear to you that I, who am obliged to live on a tenth of my income, will offer her the fifth." Milnes was abroad, and by the time he received Landor's letter, an application for a pension for Caroline Southey had been rejected. Declining Milnes's offer to renew the application, as he thought Sir Robert Peel "an unlikely man to change a resolution when nothing is to be gained by it beside the esteem of honest men," Landor bitterly remarked, "Southey was only the best man and the best

writer of the age in which he lived, and the strongest support of Peel's administration; but Southey is dead, and no edifice can stand on a dead body." Violently indignant, he went on to ask Milnes, "what think you of Napier in India?"

> What think you of this elephant in the midst of jackals and monkeys? . . . They will not make him a duke; perhaps they will not make him what they made such rapscallions as Abinger, &c. Were I Napier, and they offered me a mere barony, I would fringe my glove with gold lace, and slap their muzzles till they bled.

His spleen against Wordsworth revived when that poet, though he stepped into his dead friend's shoes as Poet Laureate, made no move to help his widow. "Wordsworth is a strange mixture of sheep and wolf," he wrote to one of Southey's family, "with one eye on a daffodil & the other on a canal-share."

To Samuel Carter Hall, the friendship betwen Southey and Landor seemed "a mystery," as they "had nothing in common."

> Southey was a Tory, Landor a Republican—or worse; the one was provident as well as just, the other reckless and utterly inconsiderate; the one was a devoted and affectionate husband, the other held matrimonial ties to be very slight; the one was patient, generous, "thinking no evil," abjuring the notion that revenge was virtue, the other petulant, irritable, passionate, ever ready to give or take offence;—in a word, the one was a Christian, the other, if not a mocker, was a despiser, of all creeds.

The evidence of this passage alone indicates that Samuel Carter Hall was a Christian of the churchgoing variety; only a frequenter of parish meetings could delight so maliciously in baseless uncharitableness. According to himself, he was introduced to Landor by Forster; actually his wife obtained for him an introduction from Lady Blessington, when he begged for "some memoranda, out of which to form a brief page of biography, to accompany specimens of modern Poets." Hall states that he had "daily walks with him over the Downs . . . at Clifton, where he was, in 1836, living," but Landor had no acquaintance with

him when he received the application signed "S. C. H.," for "some memoranda" in January 1837, for he wrote to Lady Blessington that "my ignorance of every thing that passes in the literary world is such, that I am utterly at a loss whether this is Mrs. H., or some one else of a name distinguished for letters." As he accordingly sent the desired memoranda direct to Lady Blessington, who a few days later acknowledged his "note to Mr. Hall, the husband of Mrs. Hall, the authoress," it does not appear that there then succeeded any personal acquaintance, which was probably limited to casual meetings as fellow-guests at Gore House.

Generally disliked as an unctuous hypocrite and treacherous toady, Hall was tolerated for the sake of his pleasant little wife by Lady Blessington and Dickens, who used him as the prototype of Pecksniff. Affecting to regret that his "lack of accordance" with Landor's "political and social opinions prevented my taking notes of the matters on which he discoursed," he described himself as "a willing, though certainly not a sympathetic listener," but "Mrs. Hall was not so patient with him—one day he called upon us, and spoke so abominably of things and persons she venerated that she plainly intimated a desire that he would not visit us again."

Out of consideration for the pleasant little woman who was a friend of Lady Blessington's, Landor may have called on the Halls, though he avoided purely social visits in London. But Mrs. Hall was an insignificant little body quite incapable of snubbing anyone of Landor's dignity, even if her sycophantic husband had allowed her to do so. Landor always valued free and open discussion of opinions, but while he delighted to lay down the law, he exaggerated more than ever in his later years his love of shocking listeners by his violence. Loud in his demands for church reform on the lines of *Letters of a Conservative*, one evening at Gore House he so embarrassed a devout Catholic by his ridicule of the beauty and significance of the Psalms, that Lady Blessington, seeing her other guest's discomfort, ended the discussion with the smiling but crushing sugges-

tion, "*Do* write something better, Mr. Landor!" Hall may have observed this incident, and even similarly suffered, which would suffice to excite his lasting malice. He never forgave Forster for his part in persuading Colburn to appoint Theodore Hook over his head as editor of the *New Monthly Magazine*. His memoirs ooze the pus of malice, but against Landor he became flagrantly libellous—his "advantages were all rendered not only futile, but positive sources of evil, by a vicious disposition," he was "more than a Republican . . . upholding the more odious and execrable doctrines of the French Revolution," he "made misery for all who came within reach of his influence," and his friendship with Southey and love for his dog Pomero were the only reliefs to the "monotonous story of a degraded and dishonoured life." How glutinously would the soul of Pecksniff have gloated, had he known of Nancy Jones's bastard!

Hall was significantly alone in expressing dislike for Landor. Perhaps the omission of Landor's name from the published correspondence of Abraham Hayward indicates editorial discretion in suppressing a feline snarl. Eminent among the Tapers and Tadpoles of society, and a darling of the drawing-rooms for his talent in gleaning and disseminating gossip, Hayward must have met Landor at Gore House, and can hardly have escaped without having his delicately mincing pumps heavily trodden on. But everybody else expressed admiration and liking.

Henry Fothergill Chorley, who, as art and music critic of the *Athenaeum*, achieved a reputation for integrity of judgment and refined taste within a limited cultured circle, frequently met him at Gore House, and summarised him as "a positive, demonstrative man, full of prejudice, with a head reminding me of Hogarth's, with his dog at his side." On 7th May 1938 he recorded "a very rare treat":

> A dinner at Kensington *tête-á-tête* with Lady Blessington and Mr. Landor, she talking her best, brilliant and kindly, and without that touch of self-consciousness which she sometimes displays when worked up to it by flatterers and gay companions. Landor, as usual, the very finest man's head I have ever seen, and with all

his Johnsonian disposition to tyrannise and lay down the law in his talk, restrained and refined by an old-world courtesy and deference towards his bright hostess, for which *chivalry* is the only right word. There was never any one less of 'a-pretty man;' but his tale of having gone from Bristol to Bath, to find a moss-rose for a girl who had desired one (I suppose for some ball), was all natural and graceful, and charming enough.

Later in the evening Isaac D'Israeli came in, and Chorley sat in silence, an enthralled listener, while the two elders entertained him to an epicure's banquet of philosophical conversation. A few months later, writing to congratulate him on the *Pentameron*, old D'Israeli revealed himself as one of Landor's few regular readers since the publication of *Gebir*. "I have been your constant reader," he wrote:

> I have never turned over a page of your works but with a pause of reflection. . . . All that you have written has been masterly, and struck out by the force of an original mind. You have not condescended to write down to the mediocrity of the populace of readers. You will be read hereafter. I know not whether you have written a century too late or too early: too late, if the taste for literature has wholly left us; too early, if the public mind has not yet responded to your sympathies.

The dilettante compiler of *Curiosities of Literature* survives for posterity as the father of the opportunist politician who became Earl of Beaconsfield, but this shrewd appraisal suggests a deeper reflective wisdom than his son possessed. Time has proved that D'Israeli only over-estimated the progress of intellectual development; even now we only know that Landor wrote more than a century too early—how much more can only be estimated when it is seen whether the next decade decides to redress or intensify the false values of the first forty years of the twentieth century.

Henry Reeve, afterwards editor of the *Edinburgh Review* and the *Greville Memoirs*, shared rooms with Chorley, and was introduced by him to Gore House, where he met Landor in

January 1840. His face reminded him "a little of Michael Angelo's."

> We were talking of that brilliant society of Leo X's Court, . . . and I could not help thinking how truly Landor belongs to those scholarlike gentlemen in tastes and tone, and even in his whimsical faults. There is something of perpetual youth in his age; and he has that clear spirit of thought in him which shines like the eye of some large bird in the twilight. I anticipate much pleasure from his visit.

A week later, Reeve found dinner at Gore House "very good fun—Landor rode several fine paradoxes with savage impetuosity; particularly his theory that the Chinese are the only civilised people in the world." He added that Landor "is quite as vain of not being read as Bulwer is of being the most popular writer of the day. Nothing can equal the contempt with which he treats anybody who has more than six readers and three admirers."

This pose Landor developed after his disappointment that *Pericles and Aspasia* failed to pay its way. After the success of the *Imaginary Conversations*, he hoped that his collected poetry in 1831 would win him recognition as a poet; when it fell flat, he accepted the failure as a verdict, and afterwards deprecated his pretensions to poetry. But the *Imaginary Conversations* had furnished the acclamation for which he had yearned in youth to establish his self-confidence. Convinced of his genius as a prose-writer, he believed for a few years that popularity must inevitably follow recognition by the critics. He thought he had written a seller in the *Examination of Shakespeare;* then his hopes were buoyed by Saunders and Otley's offer for *Pericles*. But, with the grand gesture in indemnifying the publishers for their loss on *Pericles*, he realised that his work would never reach beyond the limited confines of intellectual circles, and his affronted pride disdained to court even a limited franchise.

"I am resolved to hold no intercourse with publishers," he wrote, when sending Forster the corrected *Imaginary Conver-*

sations recovered from Willis, "to claim no notice from the public, and never even to announce what I have done, am doing, or may do." Having paid Saunders and Otley fifteen pounds to publish his drama, *Fra Rupert*, he informed his Rugeley cousin that he stood to gain only twenty pounds if all the copies were sold—"if unsold, I must pay £15 more"—yet he added, "I have strictly forbidden all puffs and advertisements." On receiving Isaac D'Israeli's congratulatory letter, he commented to Lady Blessington that "a century ago I should have had fifty readers, chiefly in Oxford and Cambridge," while "now at present I have a hundred and fifty at the very least, altho I have created a hundred and twenty of them."

> If I had a thousand readers I should be quite out of conceit with myself—for it is impossible that so large a body of people can judge correctly of what is excellent. I received more pleasure from my Lucullus, my Epicurus and my Diogenes, than I could receive from not only extensive popularity, but from eternal fame. They satisfied my heart, which is larger than the World's, and nearer home.

At the same time he wrote to Forster:

> *Marmion* was at first too much applauded; it is now too much underrated. Such trash of Byron's as the *Giaour* kept women from sleep and almost from scandal, and who reads it now? Whereas such lines of his (I forget the title) as "A change came o'er the spirit of my dream," few people cared for, yet they live, and will live always. I have no reason to complain, and never did. . . . God grant I may never be popular in any way, if I must pay the price of self-esteem for it. I do not know whether my writings are ever to emerge above those of my contemporaries, but if they do I am sure it will be after my lifetime.

Nearly ninety years later, in a foreword to *Caravan*, Galsworthy asserted the aristocracy of letters in similar terms: "Inpendence is the state best worth having in life, and such as believe they can achieve it in their later tales by servitude to fashion in their youthful efforts are doomed, I fear, to the

drinking of bitter waters." Like Galsworthy, Landor did not have to write for a living; he never knew the incessant toil, the voice of conscience compelling him to the desk, like such as Southey and Thackeray. But he was not a literary snob; without envy he enthused over the work of Dickens and Thackeray, who was not a personal friend as Dickens was—he expressed surprise that Thackeray, "great as his abilities are, could have written so noble a story as *Esmond*"—and he could write to Mrs. Lynn Linton of "delight" in an article in *Household Words*, "a publication which will give more information and delight than any ever excited before." Literary society he despised—writers alike who courted the puffs of reviewers and the publicity of fashionable society. Though they frequented Gore House, he seems to have avoided meeting such fashionables as Bulwer and Benjamin Disraeli. One of his privileges as Lady Blessington's guest was that "I should not let any of her court stand at all in my way. When I am tired of them, I leave them."

When the *Quarterly Review* for February 1837 selected him for the unusual honour of reviewing his complete works at length, he did not even read the article, but wondered with arrogant contempt "where they found their telescope." Criticisms of his friends annoyed him, as in the case of Dickens, when "one blockhead talked of his deficiency in the female character—the very thing in which he and Shakespeare most excel." But, apart from his castigation of *Blackwood* in *A Satire on Satirists*, the only review of his own work to arouse his spleen was a notice of the *Pentameron* in the *British and Foreign Quarterly Review*, and then because he believed—wrongly, according to Forster—it to be the work of Henry Hallam. He disliked Hallam, whom he had met at Florence and again at Clifton with Charles Elton, whose sister was Hallam's wife, and apostrophised him in an epigram as

> Snappish and captious, ever prowling
> For something to excite thy growling.

He related with glee to Forster how Lord Dudley had described to Francis Hare a dinner with Hallam and his son, when "it did my heart good to sit by, and hear how the son snubbed the father, remembering how often the father had unmercifully snubbed me."

§ 3

At Talfourd's dinner on the first night of *Ion*, "talking of dramatic composition" to Macready, Landor "said he had not the constructive faculty, that he could only set persons talking, all the rest was chance." It could hardly be other than chance, for never in his life had he been a theatregoer, and he attempted no study of stage technique. His persistent neglect of conventional forms discounted any possible chances of popularity; though he became a voracious reader of novels in the last twenty-five years of his life, he never tried to write one.

It may have been when he heard of Macready's request to Browning for a poetic drama that he decided to try whether he could improve upon *Count Julian*. Possibly, too, it was when Forster told him of Browning's completing *Strafford* in ten days that, having sprained his ankle "by treading on a lump of mortar which a beast of a mason let drop out of his hod," he utilised the period of enforced inactivity in October 1838 to write *Andrea of Hungary* in thirteen days. In the following month, he beat his own and Browning's effort in speed by writing *Giovanna of Naples*, which became the second part of a trilogy, in eight days.

In 1824, Robert Landor had published anonymously a play called *Count Arezzi*, the plot of which bears some resemblance to that of *Andrea of Hungary*. Landor was astounded when his brother showed him *Count Arezzi* and the resemblance. As Robert remarked to Forster, "my brother indeed would never have borrowed consciously from any man, and least of all from me," but "possibly he may have read this tragedy of mine,

without any remembrance afterwards that he had seen it; or met with a review of it without knowing who had written either the tragedy or the criticism, for at that time we had no correspondence or communication: and so, many years after, he may have mistaken memory for invention." It seems more likely that Robert's memory was also at fault—that in the old days of their intimacy they had discussed the story, and each independently had afterwards used it. At the time of writing *Andrea of Hungary*, Landor told Forster that he had the idea from reading Anna Jameson's *Memoirs of Female Sovereigns*, though years before he had written "a good many scraps of two Imaginary Conversations in which Giovanna is a speaker."

Andrea of Hungary and *Giovanna of Naples* were published in one volume in 1839 by Richard Bentley, for whose firm Forster was now chief reader; the author's profits, if any, were intended for Grace Darling, the lighthouse-keeper's daughter whose heroism had rescued the survivors of a wreck in September 1838. Apparently there were no profits, for the third play of the trilogy, *Fra Rupert*, was published at Landor's expense in 1840 by Saunders and Otley. When the first two appeared, he told Lady Blessington that he had no "intention or wish that either of them should come upon the stage," and he wrote to Forster:

> My drama will never do for the stage. Besides, why should I make so many bad men worse? Is there any poet, beside Southey and perhaps our Paracelsus, who would not suffer from blue devils at any success of mine? The best of our living dramatic writers, Sheridan Knowles, gets grudgingly praised.

But he agreed that Forster should ask Macready's opinion, and the actor noted in his diary on 10th March 1839, "Read passages from a play of Landor's *Giovanna of Naples*—of great beauty." He did not offer to produce it, probably for the reason contained in his later judgment on *Fra Rupert*, "which I like, as a thing of character and picture without design or construction."

Landor felt no disappointment at the failure of his drama. He might have been forgiven a pang of jealousy that *Strafford,* the work of a poet so much his junior, succeeded in achieving stage production, but, on the contrary, though some coolness had come between Browning and their mutual friend Forster, his friendship with Browning steadily developed from March 1840, when he received a presentation copy of *Sordello* with a request for his opinion, and replied, "You much overrate my judgment: but whatever it is, you shall have it, before I have read it so often as I read *Paracelsus.*" He had no ambition as a poet or dramatist. "With the exception of my 'Agamemnon' and my 'Orestes,' " he wrote in June 1839 to Procter, another poet with whom he exchanged the courtesy of presentation copies, "my poetry in no part satisfies me." As he confessed to Lady Blessington, he had rather shamefacedly consented to Forster's proposal of publishing the first two dramas, for "I said, in my last publication, that I would publish nothing more." To the end of his life he went on writing and publishing, and not unnaturally Forster regarded with tolerant amusement as eccentricity his repetition that each succeeding publication must be his last. But it was inspired, not by eccentricity, but by his old humility regarding his own powers and his honesty in facing philosophic fact. All his life he had seen with impatience old people clinging pathetically to the illusion that they had not survived their spheres of usefulness, and his pride revolted from the idea of not recognising the time to obey Pope's warning:

> Walk sober off, before a sprightlier age
> Come tittering on, and shove you from the stage.

Within three months of his seventieth birthday, he wrote to Lady Blessington:

> Once beyond seventy, I will never write a line in verse or prose for publication. . . . The wisest of us are unconscious when our

faculties begin to decay. Knowing this, I fixed my determination many years ago.

He went on writing, because his loneliness could not tolerate idleness, and he continued to publish in the hope of achieving some benefit to society; daily his indignation was roused by some injustice, and he resorted to his pen to register protest.

From his retreat in Italy he had viewed contemporary politics with detachment; his absence abroad of twenty years, during the period of reconstruction after the Napoleonic war, had made him immune from the influences which had subverted the liberalism of men like Southey, and he retained unimpaired the fervour of his early beliefs. This stalwart tenacity contributed to his popularity with his juniors. Nearly all the rising generation of writers—Carlyle, Thackeray, Forster, Dickens, Browning, Mill—favoured liberal reform, and it was refreshing to find a veteran who remembered the French Revolution, not merely not a senile reactionary, but the violent advocate of radicalism more robust than their own.

His return to England revived his intimate concern with politics. His youthful ambition had never regarded literature as a wholetime job; only his exile had left him no alternative. When he demanded, in advocating reform of the House of Lords, "Why should not gentlemen distinguished by wealth and *abilities*, and possessing hereditary landed property to the low amount of only a hundred thousand pounds, be called, or stand in a situation to be called, to the high council board of their country," he was moved by bitterness of reflection on the unfulfilled hopes of his political future entertained by Dr. Parr. In the *Imaginary Conversation*, "Florentine, English Visitor, and Landor," he had written, before relating Beaufort's refusal to make him a magistrate:

Had avarice or ambition guided me, remember I started with a larger hereditary estate than those of Pitt, Fox, Canning, and twenty more such. . . . My education, and that which education

works upon or produces, was not below theirs: yet certain I am that, if I had applied to be made a tide-waiter on the Thames, the minister would have refused me.

In *Pericles*, he recalled his *Calvus* letters in making Anaxagoras write:

> Before I left my country, I offered some brief observations on important matters, then in discussion, to persons in authority. Do I much over-estimate my solidity of intellect, my range of comprehension, or my clearness of discernment, in believing that all these qualities in me, however imperfect, are somewhat more than equivalent to theirs? . . . They rewarded me by suffering me to depart in peace, unanswered and unnoticed.

Beginning with *Letters of a Conservative*, he now used his eminence as an elder man of letters to lend force to pungent comments in the press on current affairs.

His label of himself as a Conservative was a paradox credited to his reputation for eccentricity. "You know I am a Conservative," he insisted to Rose Paynter in 1839, "and wish things to continue as they are." But his notion of conserving existing institutions entailed such reforms as few extreme radicals ventured to advocate, which he realised with puckish glee. Sending his sister a copy of *Letters of a Conservative*, he wrote mischievously that his brother Henry, a diehard of the old school who suffered agonies over the Reform Bill, "will applaud this," and reflected with mock piety how "good Aunt Eyres would have given me her blessing for trying to save the clergy." About the same time, he was emphasising to Lady Blessington that there may be "Christianity without deans and chapters," and demanding that "no churchman, excepting the two Archbishops and the Bishop of London, shall enjoy more than twelve hundred pounds yearly from the church, the remainder being vested in government for the support of the poor." To Mary Boyle, with whom and her sister and he became acquainted while staying with G. P. R. James, he stated his political faith:

My "Letters of a Conservative" were written to bring the apostate Bishops back to Christianity; to make them useful as teachers; that the indignation of the people might not rise up against the only unreformed Church in Christendom. It would grieve me to see religion and education taken out of the hands of gentlemen, and turned altogether, as it is in part, into those of the uneducated and vulgar. I would rather see my own house pulled down than a cathedral. But if Bishops are to sit in the House of Lords as Barons, voting against no corruption, against no cruelty, not even the slave-trade, the people ere long will knock them on the head. Conservative I am, but no less am I an *aristocratic radical* like yourself. I would eradicate all that vitiates our constitution in church and state, making room for the gradual growth of what altered times require, but preserving the due ranks and orders of society, and even to a much greater degree than most of the violent tories are doing.

After his philippics on church reform, he wrote to the *Examiner* on the subject of Canada; "what a deplorable thing! that the only man in England capable of governing a country, has thrown up his powers," he exclaimed when Lord Durham, finding his reforms obstructed, resigned the governor-generalship. In September 1838 he addressed an open letter to Daniel O'Connell—which evoked a reply—exposing the iniquities of Irish peers, demanding the sale of church lands to establish schools, and urging the means of assisting Irish emigration to Canada and Australia. In the following year, the *Examiner* published his "Petition to Parliament concerning Copyright," advocating reforms for which Charles Reade was still agitating nearly forty years later, and two letters on the political situation in the Near East, counselling support of the Egyptian dictator, Mehemet Ali, in opposition to Palmerston's policy of assisting France to make mischief against Russia—wise advice in the light of the Crimean War fifteen years later.

The same year he began a vendetta against Lord Brougham with a merciless exposure of his "hastiness and inaccuracy" in *Sketches of Statesmen in the Reign of George III*. He abominated Brougham, of whose notorious ugliness he wrote to Rose

Paynter, "it is quite the worst, and very nearly the ugliest physiognomy in existence. It has however, one advantage over its proprietor—it does not lie." Infuriated when Brougham, in opposing the government's Irish policy, attacked his friend Normanby, "the first Governor of Ireland who had pacified, by pacific means, that abused and indignant nation," he wrote in the *Examiner:*

> *I* dare not say that I never found in any other author, ancient or modern, so much of insincerity and falsehood: I dare not say it, for Lord Brougham is a very great and a very choleric man; and I am a very humble and a very timid one: but I will venture to affirm that in none whatever have I found so much which I am unable to reconcile, by any process of ratiocination, with what I believe to be sincerity and truth. Again, I dare not say I never saw in any one so much of arrogance, impudence, and presumption: but . . . never have I descried what *appeared* to me so extremely like them. I may be asked if I think myself capable of setting right so great a personage. No, indeed. Great personages are never to be set right. This is the only criterion I know of greatness.

Four years later, when Brougham threatened a libel action against the *Examiner*, Landor gleefully entered the lists, inviting Brougham to turn his lance against himself with a scathing summary of his career—when Brougham and his "confederates" controlled the *Edinburgh Review*, "more falsehood and more malignity marked its pages than any other Journal in the language"; "what other man within the walls of Parliament, however hasty, rude and petulant, hath exhibited such manifold instances of bad manners, bad feelings, bad reasonings, bad language, and bad law?"

Most of his campaigns in the *Examiner*, a liberal paper, consorted oddly with his professions of conservatism. He exposed the vicious government of Otho of Bavaria as King of Greece, rejoiced in the revolution at Athens, and recalling his friend Guilford's establishment of a university at Corfu, recommended Greece to a trusteeship of the powers, which would save the

country from the barbarism of imperialist Russia and "restore a little of Hellenism." The erection of the Nelson monument inspired the protest that "no such monument has been raised to Blake, because he fought for a country without a king at the head of it," and the absence of a suitable memorial to Cromwell in the Houses of Parliament he ascribed to "antipathy to republicanism." Declaring astonishment at "the injustice and jealousy which withholds from General Napier his reward," he exclaimed, "To swagger and sweat for a paltry fee in a law court, to make common cause with the criminal, to insult the seeker of justice, is enough to obtain the Peerage, by people whose manners and conversation scarcely fit them for the most ordinary society." Wisely he added:

> Unbelief in public virtue is accompanied by indifference to public interests. And surely both parties in Parliament are exerting the little energy that is in them to spread this unbelief and inculcate this indifference.

"Neutrality has not usually any advantage," he wrote to Rose Paynter in 1841, but "in these days of political excitement I have reason to be gratified that all factions are as civil and courteous to me as before." Both parties came to have a wholesome respect for his pen, and the Tapers and Talpoles began to whisper that "something must be done for Landor." When Peel's ministry succeeded Melbourne's, Landor wrote satirically to Lady Blessington on 1st April 1841:

> Perhaps you may have interest enough with the Tories, now they are coming into place, and I am growing old, to obtain me the appointment of road sweeper from Gore House across to Hyde Park. You can present them a proof in print that I avowed myself a Conservative. . . . Be particular in saying, that the place I wanted was for *removing* dirt, or else there may be some mistake.

It is hardly likely that Lady Blessington understood Landor so imperfectly that she interpreted him to be asking her influence; more probably Landor already had wind of a coming offer of

preferment, and thus foreshadowed his contemptuous refusal. On 25th September following, the month of Peel's coming to power, he wrote with dignity to Rose Paynter: "Neither party can ever be of the slightest use or advantage to me; and I was not very highly pleased when I was desired and invited to ask for something." Southey declined a baronetcy, and Landor was unlikely to accept anything less if it was offered, but to ask for anything, even by invitation, was against the life-long principles of his pride. The only wry satisfaction he derived from the offer lay in the admission that the ministry feared him sufficiently to find it worth while to try to buy him off. To his pride the offer was an insult; only four months before, when staying at Gore House, he had remarked, on proposing to call on Lord Normanby, the Colonial Secretary, if Melbourne's ministry resigned, "I will never pay a visit to a man in office."

At Gore House he met as many political as literary people, for Lord Canterbury, formerly Speaker of the House of Commons as Charles Manners-Sutton, was the husband of Lady Blessington's sister. The witty Lord Alvanley, Lord Auckland, "whose administration as Governor-General of India has been lately so much condemned," the twelfth Lord Pembroke, whom he had known in Italy, now "grown old, and almost plain," were fellow-guests at dinner, as once in 1842 was his youth's acquaintance, Sir Francis Burdett.

> I had not seen Burdett for many years, and never liked him much, he being always querulous—yet once upon a time we were in the habit of dining together daily. . . . We fell into politics, that is, he dragged me in. We do not differ in them quite as much as you imagine, only that he likes them and I detest them.

It was "amusing to meet the heads of both parties at dinner"—such as Lyndhurst, Abinger, and Brougham—"some of these people are desperately stupid, some villainously dishonest; nevertheless they do not take away appetite nor injure my digestion." Long afterwards he recalled how he once sat at dinner between Macaulay and Lord Northampton—"Lord

Northampton chattered, Macaulay was silent. I never talk when I am eating, and I took no notice of either." Some years later, he again met Macaulay at Forster's; he had lately read his *History*, which naturally, with his hatred of the Whigs, he liked less than the *Lays of Ancient Rome*, and he did not hesitate to tell Macaulay so. As this was equivalent to preferring *Fra Rupert* to the *Imaginary Conversations*, Macaulay was not pleased, and quite failed to appreciate Landor's remark that he doubted whether, in the *Lays*, he was more indebted to Livy or Livy to him. "Yet," said Landor, "it was no small compliment, for there was hardly a genius so exalted as Livy's in all the interval between Aeschylus and Dante. But there are some who do not know it, and this was probably the case with Macaulay." Consequently he cherished no cordial recollections of Macaulay, on whose death he wrote caustically, yet shrewdly, to Browning, "His history is partial, his criticism superficial, his style fantastic."

He first met Louis Napoleon at Gore House in 1839 just after his letter to the *Examiner* on Brougham, in which "I brought down Bonaparte from the stilts on which our traitors have placed him," and was amused when the Frenchman remarked his debt of thanks to the *Examiner* for its notice of "the Emperor."

> Luckily he had forgotten that my name was at the bottom. I could not help smiling. They say he is no fool—he looks like one, which is unusual in that family.

On further acquaintance, he liked Louis Napoleon, who remembered him when visiting Bath in 1846 and invited him to call on him. Congratulating him on "having escaped the two heaviest of misfortunes—a prison and a throne," Landor told him that if ever he were again in prison, he would visit him there, but never, if he were upon a throne, would he come near him. "He is the only man living who would adorn one," he remarked to Lady Blessington, "but thrones are my aversion

and abhorrence." Louis presented him with a copy of his manual on artillery; when Landor said he would "certainly have requested his acceptance of my books, only that they contained some severe strictures on his uncle the emperor," he replied that he knew perfectly well Landor's opinions, and admired the honesty with which he expressed them—which tribute he inscribed in the presentation volume. But while Landor liked and was tempted to believe in Louis Napoleon, he could never rid himself of the conviction that "every Frenchman is by nature an intriguer," and when France made Napoleon head of the republic, he recorded in January 1849, "I wrote a short letter to the President, and not of congratulation. May he find many friends as disinterested and sincere." Asserting that "necessity will compel him to assume the Imperial Power," he confided to Lady Blessington his feeling "a great interest, a great anxiety, for the welfare of Louis Napoleon," for, as he stated publicly in the *Examiner*, he doubted that "any Frenchman of integrity will direct his counsels." Within six months, his worst fears were realised when France sent military aid to the Pope against revolting Italy, and he execrated in the *Examiner* the traitorous ministers who had involved the President "in this tortuous and inexplicable policy in order to accelerate his downfall," while privately expressing his hope that "my old friend Louis Napoleon will meet with the deserts of his villainy." For the rest of his life, he visited on Louis Napoleon the same hatred as he had upon Buonaparte, with such notorious violence that S. C. Hall, when Orsini made his attempt to assassinate Napoleon III and his empress, insinuated that he had aided and abetted the assassin, because two years before, bringing letters of introduction from Landor's Italian friends, Orsini had been his guest for a couple of days at Bath.

CHAPTER XII

FAMILY AFFAIRS

§ 1

"ON THE OPERA NIGHTS nobody is received here," wrote Landor from Gore House in May 1841. These evenings, when he dined alone with Lady Blessington and D'Orsay before accompanying them to the opera, he most enjoyed. He never heard Malibran, but thought the voice, expression, and acting of her sister, Pauline Garcia, better than Grisi's, and "never liked any singer so well except Pasta," whom he must have heard at Florence. Remarking that the German Madame Schodel sang "divinely" in *Fidelio*, and her acting was "only inferior to Pasta's," he added:

> Grisi never quite satisfied me excepting in *Norma*. There nobody can surpass her. I have seen enough of viragos in real life—they no longer can interest or even amuse me.

In 1847, he "had the good fortune to occupy a front seat in the Russian Minister's box just over the stage" when Jenny Lind, in her first season, sang in *La Sonnambula*, and "her acting was infinitely beyond any I conceived to be possible." He had the opportunity of hearing rare music also in Lady Blessington's drawing-room, where, one night in 1842, "a German boy named Rubinstein," who seemed "about eleven or twelve years old," played the piano, and "never did I hear anything so wonderful and of so pure a taste at the same time." He enjoyed music as

an appreciative amateur, professing no pretensions to critical knowledge; when he heard Rossini's *Stabat Mater* on its London production in 1842, he considered "it would be presumption in me to say anything about the composition," though he thought it "less simple, and feel it to be less affecting than some I have heard in Italy."

In art he continued to regard himself as a connoisseur. As formerly at Fiesole, now in his rooms at Bath, visitors, who expected to be shown a fine library, were invited to inspect the massed array of pictures which had every inch of the wall space. He was embarrassing in the generosity of his gifts of pictures to friends, and though much has been made of the supposed Rubens lion he purchased in 1839, at which Dickens and other friends roared with laughter all the way back to their hotel from Landor's lodgings, many of his gifts had no little value. He gave his brother Henry some Correggio engravings, which Henry Landor later asked his permission to present to Lord Brooke, as they were more fitted to the dimensions of Warwick Castle than the dining-room at Tachbrook. When Henry Taylor, whom he had never previously met, called to ask permission for Southey's letters to him to be published in the collected *Correspondence*, and admired a landscape by Wilson on the walls, Landor said immediately, "You shall have it." In spite of Taylor's protests, he arrived the next day with the picture where Taylor was staying, and made him accept it. "These two interviews," said Taylor, "were the first and last of what I saw of Landor."

In August 1847 he informed his brother Henry how "a few days ago I bought for *twelve shillings* a portrait which I am confident is by Hogarth."

> Never was a finer painted in England, even by Vandyk. . . . Mistress K or H Bracebrigge 1740 or 1746. . . . It is the portrait of a lady and her child. The drawing is admirable, the colours as rich as Titian, as clear as Paolo Veronese. It is a treasure. Hogarth painted much in this part of England, when he was about the pictures at Redcliff church in Bristol.

On hearing from his brother that the lady of the picture might be an ancestress of his friend, C. H. Bracebridge, of Atherstone Hall, Landor immediately suggested, "Pray give the picture to Mr. Bracebridge, if he thinks it worth having." When Henry Landor asked why he should propose to give such a possibly valuable present to a man he did not know, he replied:

> It would appear to me quite as unjust and dishonorable to keep a family portrait, from a more legitimate owner than myself, as it would be a family estate. Mr Bracebridge must never fancy that he is under the slightest obligation to me, therefore I direct the portrait to you. It is impossible to mistake the pencil of Hogarth. . . . He is the only painter, who drew to a hairs breadth, I mean the only one except Raffael, and he had incomparably more genius than any but this great man.

"Your brother is too impatient in his generosity to wait till I can make out any probable story as to the Lady & child & has given me the picture," wrote Bracebridge to Henry Landor a few weeks later; "I shall really set a high value on it for his sake much more than for Hogarth's."

Always a patron and encourager of artists, as well as a collector of old pictures, Landor keenly studied contemporary painting. Every year he visited the Academy, preferably on a quiet day, when he could examine the pictures at leisure. When he visited Paris in 1841, he was disappointed in contemporary French painters—"the French have no Landseer, no Stanfield, no Eastlake." These three, and Maclise, he greatly admired. "Neither Claude nor Gaspar nor Nicolas Poussin ever painted anything equal" to Stanfield's "Island of Ischia," "between the time of Hogarth and Eastlake we never had an artist who could draw," and declaring that Landseer "knows the hearts of all the brute creation," he enthusiastically described to Rose Paynter the picture called "The Sanctuary," subsequently housed in Windsor Castle. Landseer, Maclise, and Stanfield he met frequently at Gore House and Dickens's, and Boxall, whom he esteemed in 1841 as "an excellent artist and a modest man," he

selected eleven years later to paint his portrait, for though "the price of Boxall for a portrait I believe is high . . . he is incomparably our best painter." His frequent sittings for his portrait were not prompted by vanity. He sat to Fisher and other young artists to encourage them with commissions, and he commissioned Boxall when Forster wanted a portrait to prefix to *Imaginary Conversations of Greeks and Romans*, though he hoped "I may be able to persuade him to defer this idle decoration until after my death."

Expressing surprise, on visiting Paris in May 1841, that "any among the literary men knew even of my existence," he declared, "I have never anywhere received so much kindness and civility." Mignet, the historian, invited him to a sitting of the *Institut*, where Victor Cousin took the chair and Thiers, whose "countenance is like a mangy rat's," was present. He was lionised at the *salon* of Miss Clarke, a pleasant little eccentric, who entertained the best Parisian society. Chateaubriand lived in the same house, but, "having a touch of the *grippe*," did not appear on the evening of Landor's visit. "I was not sorry for it," declared Landor; "he is a notable charlatan," and when an admirer of Chateaubriand asked his opinion of him, he said he seemed to him "a small bottle of sugar and water, fit only to catch flies."

He met Ledru-Rollin, "the Erskine of France," and the famous detective, Vidocq, who seemed "about sixty years old; wonderfully strong and of a physiognomy mild and intelligent." Princess Czartoryski, whose husband had been lately proclaimed king of Poland—"knowing my devotion to royalty," wrote Landor ironically, "he conversed with me the greater part of the evening"—made much of him as an advocate of liberalism, and introduced him to Madame Récamier and Byron's former mistress, the Countess Guiccioli. His opinion of these famous ladies does not appear, but though Récamier was still "the most gracefully moving woman" Tom Trollope ever saw, Landor must have been reminded sadly of when he had seen her in the brilliance of youthful freshness alongside Pauline

Buonaparte and the glorious Tallien. He was more interested in the rising young actress, Rachel, whose London *début* he had seen while staying at Gore House three weeks before; he remembered her after twenty years as "a great creature." Hearing how she had declined the attentions of a Polish count, saying "her profession was her *parti*, and that she desired no other," he remarked:

She will change her mind when she grows old, and when nobody, not even a Frenchman, can love her. How few are aware of the right moment, men or women! Generally the choice is made too soon, and then the repentance is necessarily the longer, and usually the more poignant.

He went to Paris to meet his sons. Since the breakdown of the plan for the whole family to come to England in 1838, there had been suggestions annually that his elder children might visit him. Early in 1840 it was again proposed that Landor should meet his two elder sons in Germany; later they agreed to visit England to meet their relatives, and on 5th June Landor wrote from Warwick, where he was staying with his sister Elizabeth (Ellen had died in 1838, leaving her property to her sister), that he expected them on the 20th, and they could stay two months.

Arnold says he cannot stay beyond two months in England, since it grieves him to leave his mother for a longer time. I cannot blame him nor argue with him on that point. It shows an affectionate heart which I am pleased at finding, although I may grieve in secret that it does not lean a little more toward me.

But three weeks later, still at Warwick, he explained bitterly to Rose Paynter that he was cancelling engagements to stay with sundry friends and relatives, "because my sons do not come to England."

They had reached Bologna when poor Walter felt suddenly ill after his late meazles. Arnold either felt the same, or pretended it.

Walter, in spite of his severe fever would have proceeded, but Arnold was resolved to return, and, after much difficulty prevailed on the good and affectionate Walter to abandon his determination of going onward. He, I mean Walter, expresses the deepest regret at it, and trusts he shall be more fortunate another time. Arnold on the contrary tells me at the close of his letter that he never comes to England at all unless with his mother and the whole family. He has not the humanity to express the slightest regret at my disappointment nor to defer to another moment the resolution he announces. If you live long in the world you will find perhaps many such instances of hardness and ingratitude, but I hope it may be in persons not quite so near to you as this is to me. . . . I will see none of my friends while there is any weight of sadness on me. I will walk it and reason it away. There is only one thing on earth worth an effort from me, and that is to grasp back again the senses that seemed for an instant resolute to leave me.

The following year the two elder boys arranged to visit England after spending the month of May at Leghorn, and after spending a week at Gore House, Landor crossed to Paris to await their coming. Arnold again disappointed him by staying behind at the last moment, but "good, grave Walter"—whom he had last seen six years before as the quiet boy who had won Milnes's heart, and who was now a thin, serious young man of eighteen—arrived to set foot in England for the first time at his father's side. Obedient to his mother's influence, the young man went first to stay with his maternal grandmother and aunts at Richmond, and his sense of delicacy preventing his accompanying his son, Landor spent the time at Forster's chambers in Lincoln's Inn Fields. When he went to fetch his son to take him to Bath, he expected "some degree of shyness," at least on the part of his mother-in-law, but "neither she nor any one of her daughters was less cordial with me than they had been formerly," and "not a single word on those matters which rendered my stay in Italy quite impossible, and equally so my return to the only habitation in which my heart ever delighted."

He did not impose himself on his son, allowing him to go the

round of his relatives on his own account, and joining him at one place or another for a week or so at a time. At the end of June he joined him for a few days at his brother Robert's Worcestershire rectory, "a most delightful place," at Birlingham, near Pershore, but soon returned alone to Bath, though nearly all his friends, except the Napiers, were away at that time of the year. "Solitude—retirement, rather, has the same charms for me as ever," he consoled himself to Rose Paynter, and relieved his loneliness only by visiting at Clifton his old friend, Lady Belmore, who amused him with her anger against the "vile wicked Radicals." Probably it was the last time he saw her, for she died later in the year, moving him to recall the blithe old days of 1804, when he had first met her and she had prevailed on him to attend her routs.

Declining an invitation from Joseph Ablett, he spent August in his son's company at Warwick, where they were guests of his sister Elizabeth. "That greatest Aristocrat of our family," Henry Landor half-humorously called her, when writing in 1849 to decline his eldest brother's offer of their mother's tea-urn as a brotherly gift, as his sister "would forbid my entering her House, if I deprived the future Owner of Ipsley of this Heir Loom: we must not offend her, who governs all of us." Having reached the age of fifty-three before her mother's death had released her from the bondage of dutiful attention, Elizabeth had succeeded to her mother's throne along with her keys and personal belongings, ruling with precision her perfectly ordered household and, as her mother's natural successor, graciously expecting homage from the rest of the family. Her world confined within the circle of Warwick, Leamington, Tachbrook, and Ipsley, she regally accepted and dispensed hospitality within the most select limits of county society, arranging and approving marriages, daily feeding on the news of local comings and goings, and taking a proper interest in the march of current events through the medium of discreetly chosen journals. Tyrannising kindly over her younger sister Ellen as a

weaker vessel, she determinedly treated her as a suffering invalid till she died of it; then, missing the regular visits of the physician and the subject of suffering indisposition, both as an excuse for escaping unwelcome engagements and a vehicle for accepting sympathy, she herself developed a martyrdom to conveniently recurrent bouts of asthma.

Straight-backed in her stiff and spotless silks, she received as her due the affectionate deference of her younger brothers; her eldest brother remained probably the only person alive with the power to fluster her composure. Long since he had forfeited the admiring devotion and fond comradeship of their youth. Not only had he disappointed all her hopes, but she felt a grievance that his exile had deprived her of the pride and pleasure of playing the devoted aunt to his children. Landor was her eldest brother, his elder son was heir to the family estates, and she accepted condescendingly, as a substitute for what might have been, the obedient affection of her brother Charles's daughters, Sophy, Kitty and Ellen.

But in spite of the misfortune of his unwise marriage, the wreck of his fortune and landowning aspirations, and his persistence in the extravagant opinions which had long ago outraged his father, he had emerged a man of genius and distinction. She was proud of his recognition; while she pretended to no appreciation of his work, and much of the little she understood aroused her shocked disapproval, she displayed his books on her drawing-room table and listened with gracious satisfaction to the gushing applause of visitors. In exchange for her letters of gossip about the family and local society, he wrote to her of his daily doings, and knowing her liking for the great, delighted her with casual remarks indicative of his intimacy with celebrities like Dickens, the Napier brothers—even Lady Blessington, whom she could not have called on, but of whom all the world tattled.

Affectionately admiring his nobility of bearing, she was shocked and embarrassed by his shabby clothes, and reminded

of Dominie Sampson, caused new clothes to be left at his bedside in place of his own. Probably Landor bellowed with laughter on seeing them, as when he imagined himself receiving their churchgoing aunt's blessing for "trying to save the clergy" with *Letters of a Conservative*. But delicately abstaining from reference to the change of clothes, he made it appear that he had noticed nothing. He treated her with the same chivalrous courtesy as he accorded to all women. Uncomfortable in her consciousness of having little in common with him for conversation, she found refuge in indisposition during his visits to leave him much to his own devices—of his visit in June 1840 he wrote to Rose Paynter:

> My sister is confined to her room, her niece is very kind and attentive to her. She admits me occasionally, and desires I will use her carriage, &c., as often as I like. At present I feel but little inclined to go beyond the garden.

The Warwick garden, full of his boyhood memories, he discussed much in letters to his sister; he expressed such grief at the loss of an old cedar that she had a writing-desk made from its wood, as a present on his seventieth birthday.[1]

His affection for his sister affords an instance of forbearance for which he has been given no credit. After the failure of the Plymouth project in 1838, the warnings of friends, like G. P. R. James, that his daughter Julia was especially likely to suffer from the Fiesole environment, inspired Landor to ask his sister to provide her with a home. Flurried at the idea of a half-educated girl's disturbing presence in her peaceful routine, Elizabeth declined the responsibility, deeply wounding Landor, who, however, wrote to Rose Paynter of his regard for his sister:

[1] When Landor left England in 1858, this desk came into the possession of his niece, Kitty Landor, and from her to Miss Ellen Landor Duke, who housed it at Birlingham. It was another desk of mahogany—not of cedar, as stated by Stephen Wheeler in his *Letters and Other Unpublished Writings of Walter Savage Landor* —which Landor gave to Arthur Walker in 1863, and contained the manuscripts printed by Wheeler. Walker gave this desk to Wheeler, from whom it was purchased by the Rev. R. E. H. Duke.

If she has not shown the same kindness to my family as she always did to me in our early days, that is only a reason the more with me for showing my compliance with her wishes. And indeed I now find that if she had invited Julia to her house it would have been painful to them both.

A boy even so sedate as young Walter must have found his aunt's hospitality lacking excitement; probably he preferred the shorter stay which followed at his Uncle Charles's Colton rectory, which was enlivened by the presence of his cousins. It does not appear whether Charles Landor shared either his brother Henry's early coolness towards their eldest brother, or the long quarrel between Landor and Robert. Till his death he played his part actively as co-trustee with Henry of Landor's estate, but his letters to Landor on business matters have not survived. But Landor regularly visited Colton after his return to England, and on Charles's death in 1849, he wrote to Mrs. Paynter that "he was the finest man and almost the wittiest and most spirited I ever knew."

With Robert, once the dearest of his brothers, he was reconciled after twenty years—their correspondence had ceased in 1820 after acrimony over money matters—but without reviving their affection. Drugged into torpor by the security of a comfortable living, Robert had made no effort for many years to exercise his literary talents; living on his private income and dispensing the proceeds from his benefice in charity among his parishioners, he indulged freely in the pleasures of "a capitally good table" and enjoyed the recreation of gardening. On the return of the brother at whom he had sneered as a failure since the flight from Llanthony, he felt a shock of envy on realising his reception as a celebrity in literary London. Stung into activity, he courted competition, after the publication of Landor's dramatic trilogy, by publishing in 1841 three dramas of his own, *The Earl of Brecon*, *Faith's Fraud*, and *The Ferryman*. The volume—published by Saunders and Otley, to whom he probably obtained an introduction from his brother—fell as

much flatter than Landor's trilogy as his reputation was less, and he nursed his dudgeon five years before his next effort.

With satisfaction he had noted and informed his brother of the resemblance between *Andrea of Hungary* and *Count Arezzi*, and remembering how the stigma of *Guy's Porridge Pot* had been attached to Landor, he tried to profit from his brother's reputation by deceiving the critics into attributing to Landor an anonymous work of his own. The design of *The Fawn of Sertorius* is plainly suggested by *Pericles and Aspasia*, the career of Sertorius being surveyed at length like that of Pericles; the story is supposed to be taken from an imaginary manuscript, like *The Pentameron*. Only a spoken hint that the anonymous author's name was Landor would be needed to spread an open secret among publishers and reviewers, to whom the name would not suggest the Worcestershire parson. The ruse succeeded, and soon after the publication in 1846, Robert informed his brother Henry that "the larger half" of the reviewers "supposed the Fawn to be Walter's," proceeding pretentiously:

> It is strange that such a resemblance should have occurred to so many, but it was observed by Southey in his Doctor ten years ago. It is not of a kind which could possibly arise from imitation, but must be constitutional and in the temperament. The same day that you were at Longmans, they received a letter from me in which I said that however flattering the supposition, I must disclaim it, that what would appear as a compliment to me, would be an *imputation* against my Brother, and that there was no other resemblance than such as often exists between very little people and very great ones, or a Child and his Father.

Evidently he over-rated Landor's sales value, for he added:

> A Second Edition may be required soon, and then I shall place my Name on the Title page. The only passage which in any degree refers to Walter is a Compliment, and such a Compliment as no man could pay to himself! Yet Walter's personal Friends will ascribe the work to him.

A second edition was not required, but two years later the remainder of the first was re-issued under Robert's name at the time as *The Fountain of Arethusa* was published, in the preface to which he wrote of *The Fawn:*

> It was instantly supposed to have been written by my brother: and several, even among his most discerning acquaintances, might hardly be convinced that the first page of it which he ever saw was already in print. . . . He endured so humiliating a misconception with the good-humoured complacency which he always feels where my projects are concerned.

"Good-humoured complacency" was an ungracious description of Landor's always generous praise of his brother's work. There may have been a spice of sarcasm in his compliment on *The Fawn* that "only one man living could have written it," but he exclaimed to their sister that there had been "nothing like *The Ferryman* in this century or the last, and on 4th November 1848, aptly timed to advertise *The Fountain*, he published in the *Examiner* the noble lines "To Robert Eyres Landor on his *Fawn* and his *Arethusa*," measuring Robert's literary achievements equally with his own, and praising his good works as a clergyman.

Their correspondence was concerned largely with exchange of literary opinions; when Landor sent him a copy of *Fra Rupert*, Robert declared it "a far greater work than *Count Julian*," though none of his writings gave him more pleasure than *Pericles and Aspasia*, and discussing Landor's essays on Catullus and Theocritus, written at Forster's request for the *Foreign Quarterly Review* of July and October 1842, he gracefully conceded that "in speaking of our own poets now living, there is the same freedom from prejudice as in your observations on those who have been dead these two thousand years." But apart from their intellectual interests, they shared little in common, and each felt an old man's impatience for another's oddities, as when Landor, after a visit to Birlingham

in the autumn of 1852, wrote to the their mutual friend Rosenhagen: "I found Robert neither in good health, nor in good spirits, nor in good temper. The latter would indeed have been a godsend. . . ."

From Henry, the sober man of business, whose prudence had wielded over his mother an influence he had ever resented, Landor came to enjoy esteem and affection. Deferring to Elizabeth as formerly to his mother, Henry became virtually the head of the family; every financial or real property transaction was submitted to his conduct and counsel, and Charles's children were dutifully attentive in expectations from their rich bachelor uncle. Their mother's death removed the cause of Landor's coolness, and in generous acknowledgment of Henry's services as his trustee, he had been prodigal in his gifts of pictures while at Fiesole. Finding his brother, on his return to England, mellowed by recognition of his genius, Henry thawed into cordiality, while maintaining a reserve dictated by the constitutional antipathy of prudence towards reckless improvidence. Landor's carelessness of his own interests in seeking the utmost for his children eventually melted this reserve, and their correspondence reveals the gradual process of years by which his cautious brother came to recognise his disinterested generosity, till finally his sense of fitness made him indignant in discouraging Landor's further self-abnegation, and violently partisan against his ungrateful family.

Instinctively impulsive, Landor could hardly be an impartial father. His eldest son had always been first favourite, and the preference survived after six years of separation, in spite of Arnold's callous disregard of his feelings. "Grave good Walter" he regarded with affectionate tolerance; grateful as he was for his visit, he was only a substitute for the adored Arnold. But his verses encouraging him to "Give it not up, my serious son" reveal the interest with which he watched Walter's painting and drawing, and on the eve of his return to Italy in early October, he wrote to Rose Paynter, "It will grieve me most

bitterly to lose him. God only knows whether I may ever see him again, or any of the rest."

Arnold, however, elected to visit his father in the following year. Kept in suspense till the last moment about the date of his son's coming, Landor heard "with terror and dismay" of a railway accident near Paris, torturing himself with the thought that Arnold might have travelled by the wrecked train. Declaring that he could not "quit the house even for a long walk" till he had reassuring news, he wrote to Rose Paynter:

> Rarely as I have any painful or unpleasant dream, I dreamt on the morning of the sixth of May that he was dead. It is said that every man has some superstition. I have none—absolutely none. But I have always felt beforehand a fainter or stronger intimation of coming evils—in such a manner as to leave me no power of obviating them. I remain in the house all day. I stand on my feet at every knock, open my sitting room door and turn back desperate. Old fathers, you see, and young lovers have some points of resemblance.

Arnold had not been shamed into the journey by his younger brother's example; he came in the hope of exacting an increase of income for himself and his mother. On arrival, he made scant pretence to conceal the motive of his visit, and bitterly wounded, Landor flew into such ungovernable rage as any sense of injustice never failed to arouse. They parted in anger, Arnold to visit relations, Landor to make at Gore House the stay deferred from May to June by awaiting his son's arrival at Bath. But his yearning heart quickly relented, and from Gore House he told Rose Paynter:

> I have written to Arnold—for where there is no dishonour there ought to be no dissention. That, and that alone, opens an impassable gulf between parent and son.

And he instructed his Rugeley cousin to make the necessary arrangements to meet Arnold's demand that his mother's allowance should be increased by a hundred pounds a year.

As his father had noted during his progress from boyhood to adolescence, Arnold possessed a natural charm, easily winning favour, and a tendency to laziness. Both traits had flourished in the lax atmosphere of his mother's grass-widowhood; his engaging attractions won him ready triumphs over the easier sort of women, and he had no ambition beyond lordly leisure on his rents at Fiesole, with perhaps occasional visits to his English estates. Landor's affection was not blind, and he shrewdly assessed his son's character during this visit; doubting his promise to repeat the visit in the following summer, he told Lady Blessington: "Arnold, I doubt not, has attractions nearer the south than the north. Wherever they may be, it would be a sign of any man's sagacity to pull him out of bed by the heels."

The young man's power to please where he wished appeared in the impression he made on the shrewd old attorney, Walter Landor of Rugeley, who wrote to Henry Landor on 27th June 1842:

> He has a childlike simplicity & artlessness. He knows his education was very incomplete, but I feel confident his principles are good, & that the kindness he has received & will do from his relations, will make him desirous to revisit England, & eventually to spend some time in it, though unless he gets more enured to the climate I don't think he could live altogether in it.
>
> The climate seems to be his grand attachment to Florence, for, excepting his sister, who is taken out by a family there, they appear to live almost in seclusion.
>
> He fancies he shall never marry, and that he never can spend above 500£ a year, at least in Italy. His wants are so few, that I think he would be perplexed with a large income. So far his bringing up has been useful.

He pleased the Warwickshire and Staffordshire relatives, who always frowned on Landor's Monmouthshire project, by disliking Llanthony. It was "unseasonably cold" when he went there, and he made the most of his feeling the cold as an excuse for not residing permanently in England, though he held out

tactful hopes of "making a summer residence at Ipsley" and visiting England more frequently "when continental railways are more general." He conveyed the impression of a happy family household at Fiesole, shunning society as superfluous to their self-contained pleasures—discreetly he averted the suggestion that their seclusion derived from their mother's reputation. Landor's reputation for eccentricity absolved Arnold from blame for the difference with his father:

> He has mixed so little in society, that it is painful to him. He says that his Father treated him precisely as when he was a child at Fiesole. He sat with him all the morning in the house, your brother reading, writing or *thinking*, not allowing Arnold to open his mouth, as it interrupted his father's chain of thought. He could not help contrasting this with the smiling faces at Fiesole. It depressed his spirits, & he felt unequal to face the evening parties, where his Father expected him to sing & exhibit himself.

It can be readily understood that Landor erred in excess of affection, and seemed tiresome in over-anxiety that his friends should have the opportunity to admire his son's accomplishments; on the other hand, it would seem not unduly exacting that his whims might have been humoured for a few days after a separation of seven years. "The smiling faces at Fiesole," in the light of the evidence of Bezzi, James, Hare and Crabb Robinson, seems as significant of Arnold's insincerity, as the underlined *thinking* of the Rugeley cousin's mentality—to the practical man of business it was a symptom of eccentricity that anybody should sit doing nothing other than thinking.

Landor visited Warwick in July, but then accompanied the Paynters into Devon before joining his son for a week at Colton Rectory in late August. Though he had not thus been overburdened with his father's company, Arnold elected to return a month sooner than Walter had done, and accepting an invitation to attend the wedding on 7th September of her daughter Teresita and Lord Charles Beauclerk, Landor wrote to his sister-in-law, Laura Stopford: "All day I have been dis-

quieted to think of losing my dear Arnold. I wish he could have staid a few weeks longer."

Having secured the financial objects of his visit, Arnold did not fulfil his promise to come again for the summer of 1843, but Landor was overjoyed in January by the news that his daughter Julia was coming, and wrote the lines, "To my Daughter," published in *Blackwood* of March 1843, ending:

> I urge, with fevered breast, the four-month day.
> O! could I sleep to wake again in May.

Arnold delayed till the last minute news of his decision to remain, for Landor was still expecting him when he wrote to Lady Blessington on 16th April, but the disappointment was forgotten in the delight of seeing his daughter, who arrived at Bath early in May, escorted by her brother Walter.

This visit brought far more happiness than Arnold's. Though now six years older, Julia was much as her mother had been at the time of her marriage. Old enough to remember her father with affection, she looked forward to meeting him, but still more she eagerly anticipated the adventure of her first visit to England, with the same naïve delight in novelty as when her mother, on her honeymoon, interrupted Landor's reading of poetry to watch "that dear delightful Punch" in the street outside. Landor had talked much of her to Rose Paynter, and was pathetically anxious that there should be liking and affection between his own daughter and the charming girl who so fondly supplied her absent place. Though she may have found Julia a little raw and feather-headed, Rose did her best to fulfil the hopes of the old man she loved and revered, taking her about in Bath society, and joining with father and daughter in poking fun at solemn "old Walter" on his successes with Bath's fashionable young women.

Unlike the two previous years, during this visit Landor went everywhere with his children. After three or four weeks at Bath, they spent the month of June at Warwick with Eliza-

beth, before proceeding for the first three weeks of July to Ablett at Llanbedr. Julia had taken riding lessons with Rose at Bath, but the weather was so rainy at Llanbedr that she was "tempted but once to mount a pony under the guidance of Walter," who enjoyed himself by riding and fishing. Calling again at Warwick on the way from Llanbedr, they spent a week with crusty Robert at Birlingham, before returning north for another week at Colton with the more affable Charles's family. After "a day or two" at Bath, they went for a week in mid-August to Plymouth. Poor Armitage Brown had sailed with his son to New Zealand two years before, and had been already more than a year in his grave, but Landor had become friendly through him with a Plymouth neighbour, Colonel Hamilton Smith, with whom they now stayed. Described by Landor as "a man of more extensive and more accurate information than any in existence," Hamilton Smith was an antiquary, and the old friend and collaborator of Sir Samuel Meyrick, who, said Landor, possessed "the finest and most complete collection of ancient armour, &c., &c., of any in the world . . . more authentic than that in the Tower." Meyrick's uncle, General George Meyrick, had been Landor's friend at Como and godfather to Arnold, and having already sacrificed his usual stay at Gore House for the sake of his children's society, Landor now deferred an invitation to visit Samuel Meyrick at his Herefordshire seat, Goodrich Court.

On their return from Plymouth on 18th August, son and daughter remained with their father at Bath for the rest of the visit, except for one night, immediately preceding their departure, spent with their grandmother Thuillier at Richmond. These had been happy months for Landor, and he dreaded their end. Vainly he tried to persuade them to stay longer, but they had promised "to be absent from Italy no longer than six months at the farthest. My heart sinks within me at the thought of their departure. The happy days of my existence are all past." He resented his daughter's leaving him, for he saw how she was improved by the society to which he introduced her,

like that of Rose Paynter and Hamilton Smith's daughters. Even her appearance seemed improved—"she is become a little less brown than she was, and looks much better for it. I was quite surprised and a little vext and grieved at seeing her so tanned."

Brother and sister sailed on 8th October, and two days later Landor wrote to Rose Paynter:

> My Julia went by the steamer on Sunday. The weather was very boisterous. I rose several times in the night and attempted by putting my hand out of window to ascertain in which point was the wind. . . . My dear Julia wished not only to be with me but alone with me as much as possible. We parted in unutterable grief, but youth and fresh scenes will soon assuage all hers. That is enough.

He knew that the girl's expressions of tenderness for himself would stimulate her mother's jealousy to prevent another visit, and the realisation, accepted even in the freshness of grief at the parting, witnesses the fortitude with which he ever put sorrows behind him. In the light of this realisation, the vision of the lonely old man, standing in his nightshirt before the open window, peering keen-eyed over his arm outstretched to the breeze, rises far above the forlorn or pathetic, to assume the dignity of tragedy.

CHAPTER XIII

THE BOYTHORN DICKENS KNEW

§ 1

As if resigned to the idea that the happy days of existence were all past, Landor came to talk increasingly of the end of life after the autumn of 1843. Proclaiming himself "an absolute cripple with the rheumatism"—which was more likely a touch of gout, the family complaint from which he escaped so lightly by comparison with his brothers—he declined all invitations to leave Bath before the following summer. In December he caught a feverish cold, and living on bread and butter pudding, seltzer water, and strawberry jam, felt very sorry for himself. "Health, indeed, where is it gone?" he exclaimed, with the irritable impatience of illness peculiar to those who have been lucky all their lives in a vigorous constitution. Indisposition annoyed him as an injustice. "I have no ailments," he once said to Milnes, "but why should I? I have eaten well-prepared food; I have drunk light subacid wines, and three glasses instead of ten; I have liked modest better than immodest women, and I have never tried to make a shilling in the world."

After his long residence in Italy, he keenly felt the damp of the long English winter. He wrote to Forster in the winter of 1840:

In this weather nobody can be quite well. I myself, an oddly-mixt metal with a pretty large portion of iron in it, am sensible to the curse of climate. The chief reason is, I cannot walk through

the snow and slop. My body, and my mind more especially, requires strong exercise. Nothing can tire either, excepting dull people, and they weary both at once.

"You may live in England," he said again, "if you are rich enough to have a solar system of your own, not without." When Forster was one July at Brighton, "I could not get salt-bathing quite so near at hand as yours," he wrote, "but I can get a fine fresh bath, or even swim, every day before my window," adding, "never had we such continued rain." And to Lady Blessington in the new year of 1845, "I am credibly informed that the sun has visited London twice in the month of December," he wrote; "let us hope, that such a phenomenon may portend no mischief to the nation."

Like most elderly men living alone, he took great care of himself. Always an abstemious drinker, he now never touched wine except in company. "If you really are resolved to send me any wine," he wrote to his brother Henry in 1846, "pray send me very little, for I myself seldom drink any, and it is not oftener than once a fortnight that any one dines with me." A few months later, remarking how his brother Robert "continues to be tormented by the gout," he told Rosenhagen, "I drink no wine now, so that I may hope to be excempt from this dreadful calamity."

He had always been faddy over his food. Milnes related as a legend how, at Florence, "after an imperfect dinner," he had thrown the cook out of the window, and while the man lay writhing with a broken limb, exclaimed, "Good God! I forgot the violets." Telling the same story, as he had it from Kenyon, Lowell declared that Mrs. Landor remonstrated, "There, Walter! I always told you that one day you would do something to be sorry for in these furies of yours," to which Landor mildly replied, "Well, my dear, I *am* sorry if that will do you any good. If I had remembered that our best tulip-bed was under that window, I'd have flung the dog out of t'other." In Italy he had learned much of culinary art, and now superintended the

preparation of his meals, himself seasoning the dishes and directing how they were to be cooked in wine—"he was a good cook in that way," said Mrs. Lynn Linton, "and to that extent."

He was methodical in daily routine, which he described to his sister in 1845:

> I walk out in all weathers six miles a day at the least; and I generally, unless I am engaged in the evening, read from seven till twelve or one. I sleep twenty minutes after dinner, and nearly four hours at night, or rather in the morning. I rise at nine, breakfast at ten, and dine at five. All winter I have had some beautiful sweet daphnes and hyacinths in my windows.

Oddities grew upon him; especially he developed the absent-mindedness of those who live much alone. It became phenomenal for him to arrive anywhere without having forgotten some of his luggage. Once he suffered vexation on a visit to Warwick from having forgotten the key of his portmanteau. On his next visit, in June 1843, he greeted his sister by triumphantly brandishing the key in his hand, but as soon as his peals of Boythornesque laughter had subsided, "the fatal discovery presented itself that to bring only a key was more of a disaster than to bring only a portmanteau." Of this mishap he wrote to Forster:

> My portmanteau and all my clothes were left behind at Cheltenham, *against all my precautions*. The worst is the loss of much poetry and prose written in the last three months. I am not such a fool as to trouble my head about the clothes, nor wise enough not to trouble it about the pages. However I never look after a loss a single moment.

On his summer visit to Warwick in 1844, he wrote from Birmingham to Forster:

> You will wonder what I had to do at Birmingham. Why! just nothing at all. I should have changed trains at Coventry for Leamington, but the fools never cried out a word about that station.

On his way home from a Cornish holiday in August 1848, he wrote from Exeter:

> I had no other accident but leaving my guide-book and gold spectacles. I must disburse half my patrimony for another pair! Vexatious, as I have six or seven pairs already, but at Bath.

And after staying with Rosenhagen at Cheltenham in September 1852, he wrote to his late host from Bath:

> Here I am again, not quite naked, but with only three shirts, and no change of either linen or cloth. At Cheltenham Station I was hurried from a lower to a higher Station. I saw my portmanteau deposited in the lower, and made two distinct inquiries about it. "All right, sir" was the answer. At Gloster I found no portmanteau. On Saturday I was advised to write to the Secretary of the Bristol and Birmingham Railroad at Cheltenham. He may *perhaps* condescend to answer my application—he has not done it yet.

A story told by John Sterling to Caroline Fox suggests that Landor was an interesting fellow-passenger to travel with. Sterling afterwards met Landor at Julius Hare's, on one occasion hotly disputing with him the merits of the Evangelicals, whom he considered Landor was "running down most unfairly," but his first sight of him was as a fellow-passenger on a coach journey. Landor began to talk, and "the strange paradoxical style of conversation in which he indulged," led Sterling to suspect who he was, so that he finally remarked, "Why! this sounds amazingly like an Imaginary Conversation." Landor "started at this remark, but covered his retreat"; his dislike of any sort of publicity prevented his owning his identity to this too discerning young man in the presence of a coachful of passengers.

Though each autumn, on settling for the winter at Bath, he regularly declared the likelihood of his never leaving this place again, he continued to travel every summer. Usually he went to London in May, staying at Gore House, seeing much of

Dickens and Forster, and after 1847, when William Napier returned from his post at Guernsey, frequently spending some days with him at his homes at Blackheath and Clapham. Often he stayed with Kenyon at Wimbledon, or accompanied him on summer jaunts to the Isle of Wight and Torquay, and in his company his friendship with Browning developed.

In the youthful Browning, eager, impulsive, essentially masculine, confidently assertive and often offending conventions, yet secretly lacking the self-confidence he wore as a mask to disguise the anxiety he felt about his abilities, Landor must have recognised something of himself in the years following *Gebir*. At least he won Browning's heart by giving such generous encouragement as he himself had gladly and gratefully enjoyed from Southey. The mention of *Paracelsus* in *A Satire on Satirists* had been an early and gratuitous puff for the young poet, who thereafter courted Landor with an allegiance born of gratitude, sending him copies of his publications and eagerly asking his criticism. When Landor published his verses "To Robert Browning" in the *Morning Chronicle* of 22nd November 1845, this tribute from the established veteran of letters seemed to set the seal of recognition on the young poet's reputation. Browning's father had the verses reprinted on a leaflet, and Browning himself avowed his gratitude by dedicating the last number of his *Bells and Pomegranates* containing *Luria* and *A Soul's Tragedy*, to Landor, who, acknowledging "the richest of Easter offerings made to anyone for many years," generously bade him "go on and pass us poor devils! If you do not go far ahead of me, I will crack my whip at you and make you spring forward."

Apart from gratitude, there was hero-worship in Browning's regard for Landor. In Chesterton's words, Browning "conceived himself rather as a sanguine and strenuous man, a great fighter," and he affectionately admired the dauntless spirit of the old lion who, at seventy, roared as insistently against injustice and the misdeeds of authority as in his Jacobin youth. The loyalty of his admiration flourished even in defiance of

Elizabeth Barrett's critical attitude to Landor. Though she contributed in 1844 to Horne's *New Spirit of the Age* a handsome tribute to Landor, she never overcame her first impression of impatience when meeting him in Wordsworth's company. Of Browning's affection for him, she was perhaps a little jealous, though too wise to emphasise the fact. But occasionally she hinted her feeling; speaking of "the crashing throat-peals of Mr. Landor's laughter," she remarked, "he laughs, I remember, like an ogre—he laughs as if laughter could kill, and he knew it, thinking of an enemy." And when Browning was momentarily piqued at Landor's disparagement of Goethe, she asked tentatively if he was not "one of the men who carry their passions about with them into everything, as a boy would, pebbles . . . muddying every clear water, with a stone here and a stone there." But Browning only stoutly affirmed how he liked Landor "more and more," and begged her in a love-letter to read his Tasso and Cornelia dialogue, "with the exquisite Sorrentine scenery."

Browning was to have accompanied Landor, Kenyon, and another friend on a trip to the Quantocks in September 1846. But the friend went to the seaside, and Browning remained in London, planning his elopement with Elizabeth Barrett, leaving Landor and Kenyon to go together to stay with Andrew Crosse, the scientist, at Fyne Court in Somerset. There Kenyon's "conversation and Crosse's made four days pass away delightfully," and going to Taunton, Landor "met Mr. Kinglake the author of *Eothen,* and dined at his mother's." He enjoyed himself so well that he returned to Bath without fulfilling his intention of proceeding from Crosse's into Devonshire.

He had a great liking for the west country, and went most years at least once to Devon or Cornwall. Besides the friendly circle created for him by Armitage Brown at Plymouth, he secured through Kenyon a number of welcoming friends at Torquay, notably the Garrows—with his usual prejudice in friendship, writing to Theodosia Garrow's father that Kenyon's cousin, Miss Barrett, had "written a few poems of no small

merit," he declared, "These, however, bear no proportion to Miss Garrow's." Such praise prompted Miss Mitford, three years later, to confess herself "much puzzled by the impression which Miss Garrow's poetry has made upon certain very competent and usually very fastidious critics, Mr. Kenyon, Walter Savage Landor, &c."

When he went into Cornwall, it was to Sir William Molesworth's at Pencarrow, and after Rose Paynter's marriage in 1846, to her husband's home at Restormel. Molesworth, whose untimely death in 1855 cut short a promising political career, was a leader of the younger Radicals, and highly esteemed by Landor as a politician of integrity.

Another political friend was Lord Nugent, who shared many of Landor's views on foreign politics, especially on Kossuth's efforts for Hungarian independence. In August 1846 Landor first speaks of having spent a fortnight at Nugent's home at Stowe in Buckinghamshire, "a very quiet and delightful place," and from then till Nugent's death some four years later, he was a regular visitor. They shared a taste for poetry and the classics, as well as politics, and Landor recalled pleasant hours in the lines,

> Ah Nugent! are those days gone by
> When, warm from Chaucer, you and I
> Beheld our claret's beak dip low
> And then felt Moca's breezes blow . . .
> We schemed such projects as we might
> In younger days with better right

For some years he went to the Ableths' at Llanbedr, after visiting Colton; afterwards, he accompanied his sister to visit Charles's widow at Knowle, near Birmingham. Returning southward from Llanbedr, it was his custom to stay a few days with Robert at Birlingham, and then with Anthony Rosenhagen at Cheltenham. A retired civil servant, who had been private secretary to the assassinated Prime Minister, Spencer Perceval, Rosenhagen married the sister of Landor's school

friend, Fleetwood Parkhurst. Landor met them on a visit to Birlingham in 1841, and thereafter called at their Cheltenham home every summer. In December, 1842, sending Lady Blessington the lines, "Where Malvern's verdant ridges gleam," which she published in the *Keepsake* for 1844, he wrote:

> The three persons mentioned in them are among the very best that ever lived. My excellent old friend Mr. Parkhurst was appointed by Lord North to be one of the commissaries to the armies in North America. On his return, he met Lord North in the Park.
>
> "What, Parkhurst! you a commissary! and in your old family coach?"
>
> "Yes, my Lord! thank God! and without a shilling more in my pocket than when I set out."
>
> "A pretty thing to thank God for!"
>
> He and his son-in-law Rosenhagen are the men who unite most of virtue and most of polish that I ever met with; so that I have written these verses con amore at least. Mrs. Rosenhagen, whom I remember as an infant, is the providence of her husband. Never were two persons so devoted one to the other.

Rosenhagen was blind—according to Landor, he "lost his sight by unremitted labours in the public service"—and in 1843 he was "bereft of the best and dearest wife any man ever possessed." In January 1846 Landor expressed to him delight on hearing "that you are most fortunate in finding a friend and companion so well adapted to your studious, and your social hours." This was the Rev. Rashleigh Duke, who, as Rosenhagen's secretary, read and preserved Landor's letters, of which he wrote two or three a year. Duke married Charles Landor's daughter Ellen in 1850, and they made their home with Rosenhagen till his death.

Forster relates that Landor stayed with G. P. R. James both in Hampshire and on the Dorset coast. James, who must have moved houses more frequently than any other novelist, lived at Petersfield in Hampshire from 1837 to 1839, when he moved to Lyme Regis; from there he went to Upper Walmer, Kent, in 1841. Landor was still intimate with him in December 1843,

when, praising James's character to Rose Paynter, he wished that he could be induced to fix his residence at Bath. They were in opposite political camps, for James, like the author of *Waverley*, affected old-fashioned Toryism, and engaged actively against Free Trade. But Landor had never allowed difference of opinion to disturb personal liking, and his respect and affection for James endured until, on James's death at Venice in 1860, he wrote the simple, generous epitaph engraved on his tomb. As careless of money as Landor himself, James was frequently driven abroad by financial embarrassment, and the coincidence of these absences with the times of Landor's summer rambles caused them to lose their old intimate touch during the last few years before James emigrated to America in 1850.

The death of Francis Hare in 1842, at the age of fifty-six, doubtless led Landor to seek a closer friendship with his old friend's brother Julius. Next to Francis, he had previously known best the second brother, Augustus, who had died in 1834; the youngest of the four, Marcus, he sometimes stayed with at Torquay. Since the days of his acting as Landor's literary agent, Julius had progressed in his profession from a Cambridge fellowship to become Archdeacon of Lewes. Landor had visited him occasionally, but it was after his marriage in 1844, to the sister of Frederick Denison Maurice, that Julius Hare came to rank with William Napier as one of the two friends for whom Landor felt the perfect accord he had formerly enjoyed with Francis Hare and Armitage Brown. After a week at his Sussex rectory of Hurstmonceaux in June 1847, which had "thrown several years off my shoulders," Landor wrote:

> He has married a sweet-tempered and intelligent wife, who appears not only to reverence but to love him, which is better. He might be a bishop, but he will never leave his comfortable house and charming country. His library contains ten or eleven thousand books, and his conservatory is full of exquisite flowers.

Five years later, he declared, "My friend Julius Hare has the best library of any private man in England, and also many admirable pictures, and among them a Virgin and Child by Raffael." This supposed Raphael, like others of the admirable pictures, was a present from Landor, and Forster remarked "with what a grave smile, lighting up the deep-marked lines of his thoughtful face, Julius spoke of his drawing room at Hurstmonceaux as perhaps the only one in England that had seven virgins in it each of them almost three hundred years old." Hare had humour as well as rare scholarship and taste. It was said of him that he possessed "a wonderfully comprehensive mind, but never does himself justice—leads a recluse life, is little known, and has a very unfortunate address"—he was "as nervous, dragged-looking a man as in his portrait, but far more genial and approachable than that would lead you to expect." Landor valued him at his true worth, and in selecting him as the interlocutor of the dialogue on orthography, "Archdeacon Hare and Walter Landor," not only paid him the compliment of indicating him as the nearest successor to Southey in his estimation, but testified to the intellectual conversation they habitually enjoyed together.

In all his many friendships—with Parr and Rough, Francis and Julius Hare, Armitage Brown, the Blessingtons, James, Napier, Dickens, Forster, Browning—Landor evinced the rare gift of ever enjoying the best such various personalities could give. He received so much because he gave of himself so generously, spontaneously, and without reserve. Of the eager welcomes with which his visits were received, Forster wrote: "He exerted on these occasions a fascination that few could resist; enjoyment and good-humour so abounding, flashes and thunderbolts of wrath so harmless; and, whether a guest himself or receiving guests, attracting everyone at such times by the courtliness of his manner, by an old-fashioned dignity never absent from his bearing, and withal by an absence from it, to a curious degree, of the self-assertion often loud and excessive in his writings." Because he chose only the company of those he

liked, disdaining to waste his time on dutiful social attentions to those who bored him, he was able to be his natural self and enter with zeal into the interests of his friends. The simple happiness he brought to others is reflected in perfunctory diary notes by Rose Paynter of his visit in 1848 to Restormel:

> Aug. 7.—Mr. Landor arrived. Aug. 8.—We started a carriage full for the flower show at St. Austell's, lunched with Sir Joseph and Lady Graves-Sawle at Penrice, and returned home by moonlight. Aug. 9.—Walked about Restormel and showed the place to Mr. Landor; a happy, merry party. Aug. 10.—A splendid summer day; we drove to Pencarrow (Sir W. Molesworth's) and lunched with them. . . . Aug. 14.—Went up to the Castle and got soaked through. . . . Aug. 16.—Dear Mr. Landor left us by the Plymouth coach at seven.

When he went, he left always affectionate regrets behind, and soon there would come one of his courteously charming letters, humorous, discursive, witty or wistful, never failing to speak sympathetically of little things personal to his correspondent.

There lay a secret of his charm. He was never self-consciously the literary lion or intellectual titan. In friendship nothing was too trivial for his condescension. During Rose Paynter's absences from Bath, it was his habit to care for her pet spaniel, and he not only personally superintended the dog's walks and meals, but wrote reports meticulous in detail to its mistress. Like most spaniels, "dear little Daisy" was susceptible to rheumatism, and during one attack, Landor wrote such a precise account of her treatment as he never supplied about an ailment of his own. His first act on waking "was to order a neck of mutton for Daisy"; he then interviewed her veterinary attendant, and argued his own experience with a "valuable and most beautiful greyhound" against the professional advice.

> Her exercise was gentle, and only for about an hour. I then brought her into the house, spunged her feet dry, and made her lie down upon the sofa—not very reluctantly. She had an excellent appetite, which I treated as I do my own, leaving a part of it.

On another occasion, he found that the Paynters' servant had forgotten to give Daisy her medicine. Having "rated him severely," Landor carried off the dog to his own lodgings. Bothered by its whining, he "pretended to be asleep on the sofa."

> For a long time she stood upright with her feet upon it. Then she crept on the other side of me and licked my cheek. The moment I smiled, she knew I was awake and put her foot on my mouth. I took her a walk in the Park every day, and gave her only one thin slice of bread and butter, and three biscuits of the finest flour morning and evening.

Having by "this regular and spare diet brought her into the best condition," he begged Rose, "do not vex yourself, nor let Mrs. Paynter be too anxious about her." "Ah! these pets! these pets," he concluded: "When I lost my marten, I foreswore all other *delizie*—and yet if Julia sends me a yellow *can* Pomero I shall just live long enough (perhaps) to grieve over another broken resolution."

The white Pomeranian dog, sent by his daughter, duly arrived early in 1844, and remained for twelve years Landor's inseparable companion, except during his summer absences from Bath. He did not dare to take him to London, as "he would certainly be stolen, and I would rather lose Ipsley or Llanthony." Pomero, with his feathery tail, his busy and aggressive air, and yapping bark, and his master became one of the sights pointed out to visitors at Bath. As S. C. Hall admitted, Landor "was a man to whom passers-by would have looked back and asked, 'Who is that?' " and the little white dog at his heels made him an even more remarkable figure. "Everybody knows him, high and low," Landor said, "and he makes me quite a celebrity."

In his loneliness, he sought almost human companionship from his dog. During an absence at Warwick, he wrote to Forster:

Daily do I think of Bath and Pomero. I fancy him lying on the narrow window-sill, and watching the good people go to church. He has not yet made up his mind between the Anglican and Roman-catholic; but I hope he will continue in the faith of his forefathers, if it will make him happier.

On his return home, he described the dog's welcome:

His joy at seeing me amounted to madness. His bark was a scream of delight. He is now sitting on my head, superintending all I write, and telling me to give his love.

Habitually he spoke his thoughts aloud to Pomero, who was credited with opinions as pronounced as his master's. "His ancestors preceded the Bentivoglios, and were always staunch republicans." To Forster he described how he took the dog to hear Luisina de Sodre, Ianthe's grand-daughter, play and sing.

Pomero was deeply affected, and lay close to the pedal on her gown, singing in a great variety of tones, not always in tune. It is unfortunate that he always *will* take a part where there is music, for he sings even worse than I do.

He imagined that an "easterly wind has an evident effect on his nerves," and translated into language the dog's expressions and gestures—"he twinkles his ears and his feathery tail at your salutation. He now licks his lips and turns round, which means *Return mine*."

His loneliness was intensified by the marriage, in February 1846, of Rose Paynter, his closest correspondent for seven years past, to the son and heir of Sir Joseph Graves-Sawle. "Is it possible that I appeared to you sad and sorrowful on your wedding day," he asked her in self-reproach a few weeks later, and added:

It is time I should begin to feel the effects of age, and I think I do. Let me fold my arms across my breast, and go quietly down the current until where the current ends.

He talked lightly of death. Though regular in his habits and careful of his health, he would occasionally sit up with the latest to prolong an amusing evening. Every year he attended the Master of the Ceremonies' ball at Bath, the holder of that office made famous by Beau Nash, Colonel Jervis, having been his friend since the evening when he had first seen Julia Thuillier at such a ball. After his seventieth birthday, though he had risen at nine o'clock, he stayed up at the ball till nearly three, and Forster warned him that, in spite of his health, "the enemy might bring him down some day" if he indulged in such dissipation. "I don't invite him," replied Landor laughing, "but I shall receive him hospitably when he comes."

He was ill in December 1846, confined to his bed "seventeen days, by a violent cold and fever." Typhus was suspected, "but that danger was over in two days." Some years before, he had moved from No. 1 to No. 35 St. James's Square; now he again had to move, because, as he wrote to Rosenhagen on 29th December,

> . . . my medical adviser told me that, if I continued to live, and especially to sleep, on a ground floor, I might expect cold and rheumatism from the dampness of the area just below. I took the hint as soon as I could take it; and I am now in the same St. Jameses Square at No 36. Changing my quarters, the doors were all open by necessity and that very evening I was seized with fever.

Confined to his room throughout December, as "for five and forty years I have never been seriously ill before this winter," he was moved to reflect to Rosenhagen in April 1847:

> Age has now come upon me; years only have come upon me before. A year ago I could walk seven or eight miles without fatigue; at present I am tired after walking only two or three.

He had the strong man's resentment of advancing age's encroachments upon his former powers of physical endurance; in the following July he told Mrs. Paynter, "I continue to walk a

couple of hours in the morning, and as many after dinner, but I begin to discover that the vale of years is the least pleasant of walks and the least adapted to walk in."

The publication in 1846 of his Collected Works also tended to suggest *nunc dimittis*. Since *Fra Rupert* in 1840, he had persevered in his resolution to publish no more books, though he continued writing as freely as ever. Besides his political writings in the *Examiner* and verse both in that journal and Lady Blessington's annuals, he was even persuaded by Forster, who had added the editorship of the *Foreign Quarterly Review* to his several activities, to "break my resolution of declining all entreaties to review," and deprecatingly he directed Mary Boyle in 1842 to "find in the two last numbers two *Articles*, as they are called, by me on Catullus and Theocritus." It was at this time that Tennyson, then sharing rooms with James Spedding in the same building as Forster's chambers in Lincoln's Inn Fields, remembered meeting him. Another visitor having fallen down and broken his arm, was brought into Forster's dining-room, "white with pain." Tennyson related how "Old Landor went on eloquently discoursing of Catullus and other Latin poets as if nothing particular had happened, 'which seemed rather hard, but was perhaps better than utter silence'."

At the same time, he was tempted to become a magazine contributor. Between July 1842 and March 1843 he made regular appearances in *Blackwood's Magazine*, contributing a review of a dramatic poem by Edmund Reade, the imaginary conversations between Southey and Porson, Tasso and Cornelia, Cromwell and his uncle, Sandt and Kotzebue, and the verses "To my Daughter". This connection was abruptly concluded when the "veiled editor" of *Blackwood* declined to publish a criticism of Bulwer, as inconsistent with the opinions of that writer already expressed in the magazine. "You have given me an excellent reason for refusing to insert my criticism on Bulwer's writings," wrote Landor; "I myself have the weakness to prefer truth to consistency." He was further annoyed by sub-editing of his spelling peculiarities and tamperings with his script, exclaiming,

"Pray do me the favour to inform your compositor that if ever again he has the impudence and audacity to alter a letter or a point of my writings he shall see no more of them!" Apart from the imaginary conversation, "Dante and Beatrice," in *Hood's Magazine* for March and April 1845, and some occasional contributions to *Fraser's Magazine* between 1850 and 1856, he had no other dealings with monthly magazines.

The Collected Works, undertaken at Forster's suggestion, occupied him three years in preparation. Much of the labour was expended on the imaginary conversations recovered from Willis. "Hundreds of sentences and of paragraphs I have transcribed from the backs of letters and from old pocket books," he wrote in July 1843; "Forster tells me he never saw such extremely small characters as I have employed in my interlining." In November 1844 he was "very busy collecting all I have written," telling Lady Blessington, "I am now plucking out my weeds all over the field, and will leave only the strongest shoots of the best plants standing." Forster wanted to include his portrait as frontispiece, but "I resisted all entreaties to prefix one," wrote Landor to his son Arnold, "'for it appears to me a sad piece of coxcombery." He had hoped to present the two volumes, "decently bound," to Lady Blessington when he visited Gore House in the middle of May 1846, but Forster "tells me I must wait about a fortnight."

Published by Moxon, the two volumes were accepted as Landor's final assembly of his claims to literary fame, and by his friends as an event for elaborate congratulation. Gracefully they were dedicated to Forster and Julius Hare, for, as Landor wrote to the former:

> The volumes belong to you and Hare, without whom they could never have appeared, and I shall omit all the old dedications,—for Mina gave orders to kill a woman; Bolivar was a coxcomb and imposter, having been two hundred miles distant from the battle he pretended to have won; and Wilson is worse than a whig.

Forster persuaded him not to insist on using his reformed spelling, but Landor rightly refused his cautious advice to omit the political dialogues, arguing that, "if Shakespeare had written but *Othello*, the noblest of human works, he would scarcely have been half so great as the having written many dramas in addition, even inferior ones, has made him," for "genius shows its power by its multiformity."

The publication's reception is reflected in Browning's letter of 16th June to Elizabeth Barrett:

> I called on Forster this morning; he says Landor is in high delight at the congratulatory letters he has received—so you must write, dearest, and add the queen-rose to his garland. F— talks about some 500 copies—or did he say 300?—being sold already . . . so there is hope for Landor's lovers.

Browning himself wrote to Landor, "Nothing has been published that I can remember in which the display is so altogether extraordinary, of the rarest intellectual powers, I do believe, that were ever brought together in one man." Hare believed the volumes to "contain more and more various beauty than any collection of the writings of any English author since Shakespeare." But Landor probably found most pleasure in the praise of William Napier:

> You have two or three crotchets which you know I laugh at, though I never dispute with you on them; and which I believe you laugh at yourself in your sleeve, though it is a large sleeve that would hold your laugh. However, there they are, and they belong to you, in the same manner that Cromwell's wart belonged to him, and he would be a fine fool that judged Oliver's genius by his wart! I do declare, notwithstanding your Napoleon wart, that your work is marvellous. . . . When I consider that the whole of these volumes is original, the pure production of your inventive brain, it is astounding. The variety and purity of your language, the vigour and wit of your thoughts, the extent of the ground you travel over, are all causes of amazement.

Remarking how he had "borrowed nothing from former poets, unless it be the Olympus-shaking laugh of Homer's Jupiter," Napier wished "you could throw his lightnings also! I know where they would fall, and the world would soon be purged of all knaves and sneaking scoundrels."

Landor's own view of his work was remarkably shrewd, witnessing that his reputation for rash judgment accrued, not from ineptitude or indifferent taste, but from personal prejudice or liking. In "Archdeacon Hare and Walter Landor" he wrote:

> Poetry was always my amusement, prose my study and business. I have publisht five volumes of *Imaginary Conversations:* cut the worst of them thro the middle, and there will remain in this decimal fraction quite enough to satisfy my appetite for fame. I shall dine late; but the dining-room will be well lighted, the guests few and select.

Serenely confident in his judgment, he knew that his prose would survive as long as the language; equally confident in his arrogant contempt for the general intelligence, he knew that most people, like Johnson with Congreve's *Incognita*, would continue rather to praise than read him. He persisted in the refusal to regard himself seriously as a poet, incited by the failure of the collected poems in 1831, and now wrote to Browning, "If ever you receive my collected works, pray do not say a single word about the poetry."

But while he modestly valued his English verse, he revived his old illusion about the possible achievement of enduring fame as a writer of Latin. The illusion seems the more perverse because he repeatedly expressed his disapproval of Latin epitaphs, declaring that "on Englishmen, in England, none but in their native language can be written." When the Dean of Westminster invited him to write a Latin epitaph on Henry Hallam, he declined the "very flattering" request, and while obliging his old friend Milnes at the same time with a Latin inscription for his father's tomb, he remarked, "Surely latin epitaphs in a village

church, where only the parson, if he, is able to read them, is a gross absurdity."

Acknowledging Forster's argument that Latin was no longer read except in schools as part of the curriculum, he consented to the exclusion of his Latin verses from the collected works, but their omission, while his despised English poetry was included, intensified his jealous regard for them. So he persuaded Forster to superintend the publication by Moxon in 1847 of *Poemata et Inscriptiones*, which included all the Latin verses published between 1795 and the *Idyllia* of 1820, while about half the volume comprised compositions now first published.

Forster intimated that he would never have had anything to do with the publication if he had foreseen Landor's vexation over the proofs. He abused the unfortunate printers roundly, and when they printed "Angelina" for "Aufedina," "not at all jocosely but quite angrily, asked what business the fools had to be thinking of their Angelinas of the Strand?" He took immense pains over both the composition of the new verses and the correction of old ones. "I left my bed this morning at six," he wrote to Forster, "after lying awake since three, when I suddenly remembered a correction which I ought to have made fifty-four years ago." At this time he first began to mistrust his wonderful memory; five years later he wrote, "My memory is indeed become very imperfect; but what is wonderful, my imagination is quite as vivid as ever." So he told Forster, "unless I write with rapidity, I write badly, and unless I read with rapidity, I lose my grasp of the subject." His habit of composition while lying awake at night grew upon him, and sometimes he could not trust his memory to wait till morning for writing down his thoughts. Complaining of "a touch of the rheumatism" in November 1844, he informed Lady Blessington that "it was caused by my imprudence in rising up in my bed to fix a thought on paper—night is not the time to pin a butterfly on a blank leaf." Forster had reason to endorse this sentiment, for sometimes he received illegible pencil-scrawls as corrections for

the printer, scribbled by Landor, for lack of a candle, in the dark.

According to the Rev. John Mitford, editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Moxon told him that he sold only one copy of the *Poemata*. This was to Connop Thirlwall, the Bishop of St. David's, with whom Landor had some correspondence in 1851 about his patronage of the livings of Cwmyoy, Llanthony, and Capel-y-fyn. His attention having been drawn to the unwarranted ascription of the patronage in the Clergy List to the Bishop and one of the Powells of Llanvihangel, Landor wrote truculently to assert his rights. The bishop replied courteously, saying that he was investigating the error, that though he had an application from a deserving clergyman, he would not dispose of the Llanthony living till he had ascertained the rights of the matter, and that he took "the liberty of sending you a Pamphlet, which I have lately published." As always, Landor responded with spontaneous grace to courtesy and generosity, writing immediately,

> Whatever may be my right of patronage, I shall be most happy to place it at your Lordship's disposal, and am, My Lord, Your very obliged W. S. Landor.
>
> P.S. The Pamphlet with which your Lordship has favored me is not yet arrived, but my thanks are equally due.

Presentation copies of the *Poemata* elicited high encomiums from scholars like Whewell, the Master of Trinity, and Julius Hare. De Quincey also received one. In the first two numbers of *Tait's Magazine* for 1847, he had searchingly and shrewdly reviewed the collected works, and followed this exhaustive article with essays in the March and April numbers on "Orthographic Mutineers" and "Milton *versus* Southey and Landor." Forster derided De Quincey's remark that *Gebir* on its publication, "enjoyed only two readers," Southey and himself, but there is no reason to doubt that De Quincey stumbled on *Gebir* when, as a boy, he was reading everything he could get of

Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Southey. Quoting a letter of May 1819, in which Southey told Landor that somebody had mentioned the author of *Gebir* that week in the *Westmoreland Gazette* as the English poet who most resembled Goethe, Forster was unaware that De Quincey, then editor of the newspaper, was that "somebody."

Gratified by such lengthy and critical notice of his works, Landor wrote his thanks to De Quincey, some correspondence was exchanged, and when De Quincey's daughters visited their aunt at Weston Lea, near Bath, Landor called to invite them to his lodgings. They "found him delightful company," and related of him a characteristic Boythornism. When he remarked on some trees in the garden, their aunt replied that they were now less beautiful than they had been, having been recently lopped.

> On this Mr. Landor immediately said "Ah! I would not lop a tree; if I had to cut a branch, I would cut it down to the ground. If I needed to have my finger cut off, I would cut off my whole arm!" lifting up that member decisively as he spoke.

This exaggerated way of speaking, caricatured in Boythorn, had developed since the days when he destroyed his papers and decided to sleep away the rest of his life, because Captain Vyner of the Guards delayed the delivery of the first *Imaginary Conversations*. The most amusing example was related by Dickens, who was present at a dinner at Gore House.

> His dress—say his cravat or shirt-collar—had become slightly disarranged on a hot evening, and Count D'Orsay laughingly called his attention to the circumstance as we rose from table. Landor became flushed, and greatly agitated: "My dear Count D'Orsay, I thank you! My dear Count D'Orsay, I thank you from my soul for pointing out to me the abominable condition to which I am reduced! If I had entered the drawing-room and presented myself before Lady Blessington in so absurd a light, I would have instantly gone home, put a pistol to my head, and blown my brains out!"

Shrewdly Dickens, in this instance, read more than eccentricity in the exaggerated expression of emotion. Landor was keenly sensitive to the ridiculous, and his sensitivenes suffered as much on the account of others as his own. Dickens remembered him "in the keenest distress of mind in behalf of a modest young stranger who came into a drawing-room with a glove on his head," and with what delicacy he contrived to relieve the young man from ridicule and embarrassment.

De Quincey congratulated his daughters on meeting "a man really so illustrious," and described to them his copy of the *Poemata*, "very prettily bound in odorous Russia leather," as "a present which gave me real pleasure," for "there is no author from whom I *could* have been more gratified by such a mark of attention." He was ill in bed at the time, and "having no books but Mr. Landor's Latin poems. . . . I read them at times with great interest." He felt that "it is a pity that so many fine breathings of tenderness and beauty should perish like the melodies of the regal Danish boy, because warbled 'in a forgotten tongue.' " Forster urged this view so strongly that Landor was moved to the resolve "to send you a translation of all the Latin idyls, including my *Gebirus*, out of the *Poemata et Inscriptiones*." He proposed to send a poem a week, and the publication by Moxon at the end of 1847 of *The Hellenics of Walter Savage Landor* witnesses a feat of fecundity which can have been rarely equalled by any man of letters over seventy, while the quality of the contents affords as Forster said, "convincing proof that up to this date Landor's powers, even of fancy, had not ebbed a hand's-breadth on the sands of time, seventy-three years wide."

Genuinely believing that "a collection so rich and various of classical scenes and images, limiting the word as we do in sculpture and painting, and associating it with Greece and Rome, does not exist in any other single book in our literature," Forster received the *Hellenics* enthusiastically. Landor laughed diffidently at his praise. "If ever you see the *Examiner* you will see what an enthusiast he is about me and my old nonsense of

poetry," he wrote to Rose Graves-Sawle in January 1848; "I believe in his sincerity—but when others praise me, I no more heed them than I heed a plaisterer who praises the Elgin marbles." But Forster's judgment was sound. In the *Hellenics* Landor succeeded as nearly as any poet since Milton in his ambition, conceived fifty years before when "rambling by the side of the sea" at Swansea, of writing as "a Grecian would have written." The profitable study of two generations of contemporary poets, from Shelley and Wordsworth to Browning and Tennyson, of his wide reading among the older poets from Milton to Thomson, had grafted upon his ripe scholarship an individual style, and the heroes of the *Hellenics* carry themselves with the same stateliness as those of the classical *Imaginary Conversations*. As Dr. Oliver Elton aptly comments, "Idylls in verse like the beautiful *Hamadryad* and its sequel *Acon and Rhodope*, whatever they may owe to the Sicilian poets, are essentially Landorian, as well as modern and 'romantic', and a product of the age of Keats or Tennyson."

With the *Hellenics* and his collected Latin verse following his collected works, it seemed that Landor had handsomely completed his contribution to literature. He continued to use the *Examiner* as the mouthpiece of his political opinions, always raising his voice in behalf of humanity and liberty. In the *Examiner* of 18th November 1848, he thus declared himself:

> Dependent on no party, influenced by none, abstaining from the society and conversation of the few public men I happen to be acquainted with, for no other reason than because they are in power and office, I shall continue, so long as I live, to notice the politics and politicians which may promote or impede the public welfare.

Many of his letters to the *Examiner* prove him to have possessed one of the most far-seeing and enlightened minds of his generation. He deplored the stupid policy, which has supplied the ignition sparks of half the wars in history, of dismembering the greater nations by the creation of small client states. In

1847 he advocated the union of Spain and Portugal, condemning the British government's policy of bolstering Portuguese independence to weaken Spain. "Europe has lost her balance long ago," he declared, and argued that a strong Spain might provide "a fresh poising power"—"the true policy of Spain and Portugal is perfect union, and the true policy of England is to cement it." He condemned as "short-sightedness" England's connivance in the severance of Belgium from France, though his prophecy that France, within twenty years, would re-annex Belgium, was falsified by her defeat in the Franco-Prussian war. Consistent with his distaste for setting up helpless independent states, he opposed Home Rule, though steadfastly for thirty years he appealed for justice for Ireland. He demanded that Ireland should have equal rights with England and Scotland as a constituent of a united kingdom—"We have no right and no interest to withhold one atom of what belongs in equity as much to Ireland as to Scotland or to England. Give that; and then proclaim it treason to devise a repeal of the Union."

The year of revolutions in 1848 found Landor as ardent on behalf of those revolting against oppression as in his undergraduate days half a century earlier, but, while his language was as bold and uncompromising, his mad Jacobinism had matured into a wise and enlightened Liberalism. So rich in the ore of truth and foresight are his political letters that they might be supposed the work of a veteran of the Fabian Society ninety years later. When British and French statesmen like Gladstone and Lamartine were talking of Polish independence as unctuously and vacuously as Chamberlain and Daladier at a later epoch, Landor aptly pointed out that "without the co-operation of the Hungarians"—without, in fact, a means of entering Polish territory—"the difficulty of relieving Poland is extremely great." Warning Hungary prophetically that, "if she sides with Austria, she will sink again into subjection," he conjured France to influence Hungary to make common cause with Italy and Poland, at the same time advising diplomatic tactics to win for Poland as allies those Cossack tribes which might otherwise be

used by Russia for invasion. "Force hath been too generally and too exclusively opposed to force," he wrote, and again some months later:

> Is it more difficult to conciliate nations by kindness than kings by treaties? Are sympathies confined to the higher classes only? War is begun between the few on one side and the many on the other. . . . Had I a voice in any country on the continent, I would say, "Confide no longer; but be clement; be generous; give your princes a chance and a choice of becoming honest men; grant them a sufficiency to educate their children well, and to maintain them handsomely, far away from the land of their birth, and from the breath of evil counselers."

When Ferdinand of Sicily earned the sobriquet of Bomba by his bombardment of Messina, Landor persuaded Longmans to publish in a shilling pamphlet his *Imaginary Conversation of King Carlo-Alberto and The Duchess Belgioioso, on The Affairs and Prospects of Italy*, with the advertisement that "whatever profit may arise from this impression will be given to the sufferers of Messina." His affectionate concern for the country of his adoption in its struggles for liberty found expression in another pamphlet, *The Italics of Walter Savage Landor*, published in London, probably at his own expense, by Reynell and Weight. This contained the fine and dignified *Ode to Sicily*, beginning "Few mortal hands have struck the heroic string"; lines to the exiled Liberal leader, Confalonieri, and to St. Charles Borromeo on a "massacre" of Milan civilians by Austrian troops; and four short poems, that last addressed "To Francis Hare, Buried at Palermo."

The British government, with the same obtuseness regarding South-Eastern and Central Europe as characterised its policy during the next ninety years, despised views like Landor's as delusions of irresponsible eccentricity; when Kossuth appealed for British intervention against Austria, Palmerston replied that his government only acknowledged the existence of Hungary as part of the Austrian Empire. After Kossuth had declared

Hungary's independence, Landor addressed to him an open letter in the *Examiner* of 19th May 1849, excusing himself because "before you were born I was an advocate, however feeble, of that sacred cause which you are now the foremost in defending," and asking

> Do not trample on this paper for being written by an Englishman. We are not all of us jugglers and dupes, though we are most of us the legitimate children of those who crowded to see a conjuror leap into a quart bottle. . . . Be amused, but never indignant, at the spectacle of our public men; at restlessness without activity, at strides without progress, pelted from below by petulance without wit. . . .

Applauding Kossuth for having "swept away the rotten house of Hapsburg," he exhorted him to hold firmly "the sword and the scales of justice" deposited in his hands.

As a veteran of letters, like Wells and Shaw in the nineteen-thirties, Landor enjoyed licence thus to indulge in home truths against politicians, who, smarting wryly from his stings, feared his literary eminence too much for reprisals, and either affected scornful silence or employed jackals of journalism to deride him as a privileged crank, distinguished in his own sphere but deplorably deficient in understanding of the conventional tricks of the political game. He also gained the esteem and friendship of a few men of real distinction. Lord Dudley Stuart collaborated with him in raising a subscription to assist exiled Hungarians in poverty, and esteeming him "the truest, the most generous, the most energetick of philanthropists," Landor maintained a friendly correspondence with him till Stuart's death in 1854 at Stockholm on a mission in aid of the oppressed Poles. Fully sharing Landor's hatred of tyranny, Stuart wrote in protest when Landor in October 1852, declared of Louis Napoleon, "His perjuries, far from excluding him, place him among the legitimate sovrans of the highest order, of whom not a single one, excepting the Emperor of Russia, is guiltless of this crime against his people, God's vicar taking the preced-

ency"—he objected that the only real exception was not the Czar Nicholas, "but our own venerated and beloved Queen Victoria." In the *Examiner* of 13th November following Landor acknowledged that his language was "too lenient" to the Czar, but

> If I have represented him as guiltless of perjury, and have placed him apart from his fellows, it was only in relation to the subjects born within his proper dominions. He swore nothing to them: he had no need for it. And indeed in regard to Poland he has done nothing worse than our administrators have done towards the Ionian Islands, Australia, Ceylon, and the Cape, by constitutions undermined, engagements broken, remonstrances derided, and the most fertile countries inundated and devastated by periodical shoals of outcast criminals.

Such courageous criticism of British imperialism slid like water from the duck's back of Victorian complacency, and largely contributed to Landor's reputation for eccentricity narrowly escaping madness.

His assiduity in the cause of liberty made his Bath lodgings a place of pilgrimage for revolutionary exiles. His old Florentine friend Sandford—"Sandford! the friend of all the brave"—was "the friend also of Klapka and all the other chief Hungarians"; he visited Landor at Bath at least twice in 1850 and was the means of introducing to him Count Teleki, the former Hungarian ambassador to France, as he was later of introducing the assassin Orsini. Knowledge of his personal acquaintance with Orsini was coupled with his poem, *Tyrannicide*—beginning "Danger is not in action, but in sloth"—to suggest to such cattle as Samuel Carter Hall that Landor had incited Orsini to his attempt on the life of Louis Napoleon, a charge which Landor repudiated in a letter to the *Times* of 17th March 1858, differentiating between assassination as "the basest of crimes" and tyrannicide as "the sublimest of virtues, it being self-immolation for a man's native country," since "it strikes him down who hath subverted the laws and stands above them on

their ruins." *Tyrannicide* was printed as a threepenny leaflet about December 1851, the proceeds to be devoted to the benefit of the Hungarian refugees in America, and followed the publication, as a leaflet and in the *Examiner* of 15th November, of the lines "On Kossuth's Voyage to America," which were read at a public meeting at Birmingham before the exiled Kossuth sailed that month. In a letter to the *Examiner*, which Landor trusted "my grandchildren will value as the highest honor that could be conferred on the best of them, and the most imperishable part of their heritage." Kossuth acknowledged his advocacy of Hungarian liberty, and on his return to England, became a personal friend and one of his hosts on Landor's last pleasure trip to London in 1855.

Through Landor, Kossuth met Forster and was enabled to become a contributor to the *Atlas*, a Radical weekly to which Hazlitt had contributed under its first editor, R. S. Rintoul. When Rintoul left to edit the *Spectator*, the *Atlas* was for many years controlled by Robert Bell, one of the many Irish journalists infesting Fleet Street in the days of Maginn. On his appointment as a commissioner for lunacy in 1855, Forster's connection with the *Examiner* ceased, and hearing that Kossuth was engaged to write for the *Atlas*, Landor sent the paper "a couple of articles," and entered his name as a subscriber. Probably Forster would have hesitated to print either of the articles, without alteration, in the *Examiner;* that the *Atlas* did so emphasises Landor's prestige. For the Crimean War was in progress, and the title of the articles—published as letters above Landor's signature—"The False Politics of the War," indicate the boldness of the attack on the British government. The "Ministry of All the Talents" had lately been defeated, ostensibly on Roebuck's motion condemning the inept prosecution of the war, but practically on Lord John Russell's resignation from petty personal pique against Gladstone. For several years Palmerston and Russell had followed each other in and out of the Foreign Office, and Landor's first letter opened with a brusque rebuke to the public for "looking at Lord Palmer-

ston and Lord John Russell, as they played at leapfrog over each other's shoulders," while the expeditionary force at Sebastopol was suffering disease and starvation for want of adequate supplies. His second letter derided the government policy of inflaming popular opinion against Prussia for preserving neutrality; as he wrote in a private letter at the time, "Could any man less of a fool than Lord J. Russell think Prussia so mad as to join our alliance so contrary to her interests." Bitterly he spurned the politicians continually exchanging offices, "shifting from shoulder to shoulder the blame and responsibility of their misdeeds"—"such men are as incapable of ensuring an honourable peace as of conducting a successful war."

On reading these letters, William Napier wrote: "You don't draw your ale mild, any more than I do; but if Pam or Johnny call you out, I will be your second." The sycophantic worshippers of place, who affected to laugh at Landor as an irresponsible eccentric, might have scoffed that Napier was equally odd and irascible, but the fact of the letters' publication by the *Atlas* indicates that Landor expressed views shared by an intelligent section of the public. Some evidence, besides, of his personal prestige as a publicist appears from his successful appeal in the *Times* on behalf of the last destitute descendant of Daniel Defoe—"a Crusoe without a Friday—in an island to him a desert"; a fund was raised, including £100 from the Queen's bounty, which provided sufficient income to maintain the old man, and, after his death, his daughter.

CHAPTER XIV

OLD AGE AND SCANDAL

§ 1

He continued graciously as a grand old man of letters. He had now seen Browning's arrival at assured reputation, and he invariably repaid the respectful attentions of young writers with enthusiastic encouragement. Personal considerations tended more than ever to prejudice his judgment; because he approved the political tenor of Aubrey de Vere's *English Misrule and Irish Misdeeds*, he exclaimed, when that young man sent him a volume of his poems, "Nothing of our days will bear a moment's comparison with them." Stoutly he maintained such rash opinions, for having written thus in 1847, he rated de Vere three years later "of a higher genius than either" Goldsmith or Tom Moore. He became so notorious for such excesses that Coventry Patmore's wife, on the appearance of *The Angel in the House*, could refer ungraciously to a letter from Landor "full of somewhat senile ecstasy, which I will not quote."

Memory of his own youthful hunger for appreciative encouragement may have inspired his lavish praise of young writers; none ever appealed to him in vain, and he was punctilious in his courtesy even to the most obscure. When he asked William Allingham to "accept thanks for a very beautiful volume of Poems, as far as I am able to judge in the first half hour after their arrival," he knew nothing of the author, except that "from the Preface I may very pardonably believe you to be an

Irishman, since it is dated from Ballyshannon." Some two years later, in January 1853, when he heard that Allingham was trying to earn a literary livelihood, he gave him an introduction to Milnes as potentially the most useful person he could know, and regretting that he had been unaware of Allingham's presence in London during his recent visit, invited him to meet him at Bath.

My residence is in Bath about nine months in the year, and always in the same place, 3 Rivers Street. I generally go to town about the end of June and return by the first of September. When you come again this way, I can offer you a bed, I have three spare ones—and you shall have a reading-room to yourself. You will find very few books—for I send to my sons in Italy all I buy in the course of the year, and I keep only a few Latin and Greek.

No. 36, to which he had moved in the autumn of 1846, was Landor's last address in his beloved St. James's Square; he was established in Rivers Street when Carlyle, on his way to Cardiff in 1850, spent a night with him.

Landor was in his house, in a fine quiet street like a New Town Edinburgh one, waiting for me, attended only by a nice Bologna dog. Dinner not far from ready; his apartments all hung round with queer old Italian pictures; the very doors had pictures on them. Dinner was elaborately simple. The brave Landor forced me to talk far too much, and we did very near a bottle of claret, besides two glasses of sherry; far too much liquor and excitement for a poor fellow like me. However, he was really stirring company: a proud, irascible, trenchant, yet generous, veracious, and very dignified old man; quite a ducal or royal man in the temper of him; reminded me something of old Sterling, except that for Irish blarney you must substitute a fund of Welsh choler. He left me to go smoking along the streets about ten at night, he himself retiring then, having walked me through the Crescent, Park, &c., in the dusk before.

Under the genial influence of Landor's hospitality, the dyspeptic Carlyle—whom Landor once described as "a vigorous

thinker, but a vile writer, worse than Bulwer,"—carried away an impression of Bath as "decidedly the prettiest town in all England," and four years later Edward FitzGerald, a man as difficult to please as Carlyle, was so favourably impressed that he thought of spending part of the winter at Bath. He wrote to Frederic Tennyson in May 1854:

> Old Landor quoted to me "Nullus in orbe locus, etc.," apropos of Bath: he, you may know, has lived here for years, and I should think would die here, though not yet. He seems so strong that he may rival old Rogers. . . . Landor has some hundred and fifty Pictures; each of which he thinks the finest specimen of the finest Master, and has a long story about, how he got it, when, etc. I dare say some are very good; but also some very bad. He appeared to me to judge of them as he does of Books and Men; with a most uncompromising perversity which the Phrenologists must explain to us after his Death.

Soon after Carlyle's visit, Andrew Crosse's second wife came to Landor's lodgings for the first time. She and her husband stayed at an hotel when they visited Bath from their Quantock home, but it became "a sort of institution" for them to spend their first afternoon with Landor and dine with him at three o'clock. He always dined at three, and if his guests were late, he did not wait, even for women. Once Mrs. Crosse and her sister were so late that he had finished his meal when they arrived; he courteously excused himself on the ground of his rule never to wait dinner, but "had taken care that the dishes should reappear nice and hot and in every way comfortable." He dined in his drawing-room, which was his only living-room, the cloth laid on a round table, and everybody paid tribute to his "good and hospitable" dinners. No man of letters ever had less inclination to dramatise himself than Landor, but instinct had led him to choose in these last lodgings a setting peculiarly suited to his personality—"the aspect of the old-fashioned house, and its locality suggested the Bath of Sher-

idan's time," and the man himself was one of the few survivors who remembered those picturesque days.

Like Carlyle, Mrs. Crosse noticed that "even the doors, inside and out, were hung with framed oil-paintings"; also that "a shelf by the side of the fireplace contained the few books that Landor cared to possess." Mrs. Lynn Linton remembered among them a Milton, a Homer, a Horace, Shakespeare's Sonnets, and a Ben Jonson, and remarked how, though he had countless presentation books, he sent every book he received, as soon as he had read it, to his sons in Italy or to one of his brothers.

Though, as the years passed, he grew resigned to receiving no further visits from his children, he kept as closely in touch with them as they allowed. It is ironical that his own children, of all his correspondents, apparently valued his letters too little to preserve them. One letter to Arnold, dated 6th October 1847, owed its preservation to its containing a prescription for the ear trouble from which Landor heard his friend Kirkup was suffering; he had obtained it from "the best aurist in England," and bade Arnold, "Pray take it *directly* to Kirkup with this letter." A Mrs. Macdonell was coming to England, and Landor assured Arnold that he would "not lose a single day in waiting on her" to thank her for chaperoning his daughter Julia in Florence. He ended, "with love to dearest Julia and your brothers, I remain ever, My good Arnold, your affectionate Babbo."

The household at Fiesole had developed much as Landor's friends had feared when they tried to induce his return; one of the sons kept his mother's cook as his mistress, and had children by her. In such an environment, the frivolous and susceptible Julia met her inevitable fate; at the age of thirty, in 1850, she gave birth to an illegitimate daughter. Landor's immediate reactions do not appear, but he behaved with none of the conventional Victorian parent's indignation. For him the fault of the daughter was the crime of the mother, as he illustrated in verses to "The Mother" in 1852:

Unnatural mother
Who've hastened to smother
Whatever is fairest and fondest in child;
In Hell's bitter water
You've plunged your own daughter
Nor have wept when she wept nor have
smiled where she smiled.

In August 1855 Julia wrote to him that she had received an offer of marriage from a young titled Frenchman; she asked her father's consent, but added, "Do you think you could contrive to give me something, for that is the essential point." The same day as the letter arrived, Landor sent it on to his brother Henry, asking if a hundred pounds a year could be secured for his daughter out of the annual income from Llanthony and Ipsley. He was writing for information about the prospective bridegroom to the French, as well as to the British, minister at Florence, Lord Normanby, and if their reports were satisfactory, "I think I may give my consent." "Rather than that poor dear Julia should be disappointed in her affections," he declared, "I would give up 100 out of my 400," and his remark that "Poor Julia I hope will now be removed from a vile mother" reveals that he still excused her peccadillo on the score of her mother's vicious influence.

His brother Henry, however, promptly replied that the trust deed would not allow any settlement on Julia, and declared with some heat "You made a most indiscreet, and too liberal, arrangement of your property during your life, and in your old age, when you ought to have a House and a regular attendant, you are left to Strangers." He pointed out that Landor's wife received an anuual allowance of five hundred pounds, while Arnold also received a hundred from the estate, in addition to the villa and land at Fiesole, which Landor had transferred to him by deed of gift and Henry valued at £150 a year; and this annual income of £750 had lately been in-

creased to £1,010 by legacies from their aunt Elizabeth of £80 a year each to the two younger sons and £100 to Julia. "Surely," wrote Henry, "this is out of all proportion & reason, that the Owner of the Property has only £400, and thereout to pay for lodgings, no house, no servant; from which source should any Income be derived for your Daughter, I leave it to you & to your Family to decide." Evidently Landor's family did not share his brother's view; no more was heard of the French count, and the jilted Julia elected to blame her father for the disappointment, thenceforth vying with Arnold in undutiful conduct.

Though he grieved over the loss of his children's society, Landor continued true to his character of never repining, and eagerly welcomed young faces about him. In the heart of Francis Hare's son Augustus he tried to fill something of the dead father's place. He had the rare gift of putting self-conscious youth at ease by inducing forgetfulness of disparity in age; remarking how "nothing could be more nobly courteous than his manner to his guests," young Hare declared that "this was as marked towards an ignorant schoolboy as towards his most distinguished visitor; and his conversation, whilst calculated to put all his visitors at their ease and draw out their best points, was always wise, chivalrous, pure and witty." The glimpse of the fourteen-year-old schoolboy dining alone with the distinguished old man in the mellow surroundings of the Rivers Street drawing-room gradually thawing under the genial warmth of the elder's courtesy and beginning to feel his feet at being treated as a grown-up equal, offers a pleasant instance of the successful blending of youth with age. Landor's kindness led the boy to believe that he "preferred me at this time to any of his own children," and though his progress to manhood took him away from scenes which became a boyhood memory, he preserved a grateful affection and reverence for the old man.

Young Hare remembered that "a pretty young Bath lady, Miss Fray," often dined with Landor when he was there.

"After dinner Mr. Landor generally had a nap, and would say, 'Now, Augustus, I'm going to sleep, so make love to Miss Fray' —which was rather awkward." After the scandal which caused his final exile, suburban Pecksniffs of the Samuel Carter Hall stamp discovered a subject for prurient gossip in Landor's liking for the society of attractive young women. But nobody had less of the sensual curmudgeon's dribbling lechery. Young women delighted in the old man's courteous charm, and the pleasure with which he welcomed their affection he expressed to Rose Graves-Sawle in a letter of May 1849:

> What a charm it is even at the close of life to be cared for by the beautiful and gentle, and to see them come out from the warm sunshine and the sweet flowers towards us in the chilliness of our resting place. This is charity, the charity of the Graces. They are fond of walking where Love has walked before, altho' they are certain they shall not find him there again.

Luisina de Sodre, the young daughter of Ianthe's daughter Maria, he described as "very attentive" to him; "she is like her dear mother in all things but consummate beauty, and loves me affectionately." To her he addressed the wistful verses, first published in the *Examiner* of 31st August 1850, which were inspired by watching her in those same Bath assembly rooms where he had lingered in love-making with her grandmother.

But the chief successor to Rose Graves-Sawle was Eliza Lynn, afterwards a well-known novelist and journalist as Mrs. Lynn Linton. Brought up in a country parsonage, the strongest character in a family of brothers and a more fragile sister, brisk, independent, with no nonsense about her, she went up to London at the age of twenty-three to live in a boarding-house and earn her own living by her pen. She was twenty-five and about to publish her second novel, when she went to stay at Bath with Dr. Brabant, an old acquaintance of Landor's, and in the fashionable antique shop—kept by one, Charles Empson, from whom Landor must have bought sundry pictures—she saw

a noble-looking old man, badly dressed in shabby snuff-coloured clothes, a dirty old blue necktie, unstarched cotton shirt—with a front more like a nightgown than a shirt—and "knubbly" apple-pie boots. But underneath the rusty old hat brim gleamed a pair of quiet and penetrating grey-blue eyes; the voice was sweet and masterly; the manner that of a man of rare distinction. Dr. Brabant spoke to him, and his sister Miss Hughes whispered to me, "That is Mr. Landor."

She saw, "as if he had been a god suddenly revealed," one of her "great spiritual masters." Such fervent admiration, from a young woman of Eliza Lynn's forceful personality, only the most supercilious conceit could have damped; Landor gratefully accepted it, and gave in return affection, as well as admiration for her staunchness, courage, and independence. When her second novel, *Amymone*, appeared, a laudatory review in the *Examiner*, if not written by Landor, was inspired by him, and his influence later gained her an introduction to *Household Words*, with which she established a long connection on sheer merit, Dickens describing her on a list of his contributors as "good for anything, and thoroughly reliable."

Her devotion to Landor was such that they became father and daughter—"Mr. Landor held with me the place of a father, ever indulgent, kind and generous; I being at all times like his loving and dutiful child"—and his letters to her usually began "My dear Daughter" and ended "Your affectionate Father."

I used to stay with him at Bath for many weeks at a time, sometimes once and sometimes twice in the year. And even when I visited other dear friends in that beautiful and beloved city, it was my duty to go daily to his house punctually at twelve o'clock, and sit and walk with him until two, when he dined; also I dined with him regularly twice a week, when I was not actually staying with him, generally on Tuesday and Friday, when he always took care to give me something he knew I liked, and especially to have a bottle of his famous Malmsey Madeira on the table. This was some of a pipe laid down by his grandfather, and was over ninety years old. Sometimes the bottle was undrinkable, thick as mud and hor-

rible to the taste; but when in good condition it was the most delicate and delicious wine.

Though he thus far sacrificed his old preference for eating alone, he never talked during dinner, and if anybody tried to engage him in conversation, "he either rebuked them at the time or blazed out against them afterwards." In Eliza Lynn he found a perfect companion, for she never spoke to him unless he first addressed her. Admiring and appreciative, she was an eager listener, whether on a long winter evening when, after tea, he read Milton to her for an hour or two at a stretch, or on his favourite walk round Lansdowne Crescent, which he liked for its view. He talked to her freely of her work and his own—she dedicated to him in 1851 her third novel, *Realities*—and while she noted that he rarely offered advice, she declared that she never had from anybody sounder counsel than she received from him. With her he discussed the whole gamut of his fads about diction and orthography, but while, to the despair of Forster, he insisted on practising his theories of spelling in his own work, he never advised Miss Lynn to adopt them.

In this appears evidence both of his wisdom and eccentricity. Remarking on his oddities of pronunciation, Tom Trollope was astonished at his dropping of aspirates—"that a man who was not only by birth a gentleman, but was by genius and culture—and such culture!—very much more, should do this," seemed to Trollope incomprehensible. Angrily denouncing the "absurd calumnies" circulated about Landor after his death, Augustus Hare declared none was "so utterly absurd" as this statement of Trollope's, for "I lived with him in close intimacy for years, and I never once traced the slightest indication of his ever dropping the aspirate; indeed, no one was more particular in inculcating its proper use." Hare was a boy when he knew Landor; it seems that, just as Landor recognised that, as an established writer with a limited public, he could afford unconventionalities which would seriously handicap a young writer, like Eliza Lynn, with her living to earn, so he appreciated that

oddities of speech, regarded as interesting eccentricity in a celebrity, if imitated by a boy, would bring upon him humiliating ridicule. In common with others, Miss Lynn testified that Landor habitually said "woonderful," and "goolden," "woorld," "srimp," "yaller," and "laylock," and pronounced "won" as in "on," not as "wun." Though Rosina Bulwer laughed at his use of "woonderful" from her acquaintance with him as early as 1839, it seems that he came to indulge habitually these fads in pronunciation only with advancing years, and he enunciated as normally in the intellectual society at Gore House as in the company of young Hare. It was when he felt the mischievous impulse to shock that he indulged his oddities most freely, and the affected Rosina Bulwer, like the portentous Tom Trollope, inspired the impulse.

Egoism in advancing age always emphasises existing eccentricity. Though he never equalled the absent-mindedness of De Quincey, who was liable to set himself on fire when reading by candle-light, Landor's forgetfulness and outbursts of anger became increasingly comic. Eliza Lynn noted that "his actions were always eager, half tremulous, and I must confess clumsy," and he had "no perception of small things."

He was always losing and overlooking, and then the tumult that would arise was something too absurd, considering the occasion. He used to stick a letter into a book: then, when he wanted to answer it, it was gone—and some one had taken it—the only letter he wanted to answer—that he would rather have forfeited a thousand pounds than have lost, and so on. Or he used to push his spectacles up over his forehead, and then declare they were lost, lost for ever. He would ramp and rave about the room at such times as these, upsetting everything that came in his way, declaring that he was the most unfortunate man in the world, or the greatest fool, or the most inhumanly persecuted. I would persuade him to sit down and let me look for the lost property; when he would sigh in deep despair, and say there was no use in taking any more trouble about it, it was gone for ever. When I found it, as of course I always did, he would say, "thank you," as quietly and naturally as if he had not been raving like a maniac half a minute before.

This was the veritable Boythorn, or "the gentle savage," as Mary Boyle called him—the same Landor who had liver bile and threatened never to write again when the guardsman delayed delivery of his manuscript. His judicious brother Henry must have smiled wryly when Landor wrote to him in 1857:

> Philosophy has taught me, what Christianity has failed to teach others, to suppress both malignity and anger. Nobody has seen me angry these twenty years, nor malignant ever.

It is true that he never in his life bore malice, unless so could be called his indignant resentment against the Duke of Beaufort, the barrister Taunton, and Lord Burghersh. Nor did his temper ever in his life cost him a friend, except in the case of an old lady at Bath, at whose house he met a gushing female, who, thinking to make conversation and having seen a letter of his in the *Examiner* remarked that he "wrote for the papers." Landor replied brusquely, "I do not, madam," and when the lady playfully repeated, "Oh yes you do—I have just read something of yours," flew into such a fit of fury that his hostess felt herself unable to forgive such treatment of a fellow-guest. Most of those who knew him would have endorsed William Napier's defence of him when he was attacked for upholding tyrannicide: "I call it noble . . . because it is not Landor's writing, but Landor himself, bold, generous, brave and reckless where his feelings as a human being are stirred. . . . This mistake does not make Landor obnoxious to anybody who knows him, because it is not his feeling; he is reckless in expression only, not in deeds. . . . He is an oak with many gnarled branches and queer excrescences, but always an oak, and one that will be admired for ages." Admitting that he was "difficult" and needed "careful handling," Eliza Lynn remarked:

> He would return respect for respect. He did not need, as some weak and vain men do, that a woman should be perpetually on her knees before him, worshipping; he did not require incessant flattery to keep him in good humour, though he liked honest praise

and faithful love as well as any of us; and he respected individuality that was not aggressive; but the great thing he demanded was non-interference, and he could not brook contradiction. His wife should have been a woman of sweet temper, ready tact, and cultivated intellect; so that she would not have needlessly irritated him, and yet would have forced him to respect her. And above all she should have been able to understand when to leave a thing alone. When his passion, or madness rather, was on him, it was useless to try and reason with him. He was mad, and you might as well have tried to stop the course of a tempest as to control him. But give him time—let the fit die out—and then he would take things quietly, and perhaps laugh at himself for his fury.

Forster observed that Landor was "at his very best" in the presence of Ianthe—"in language, manner, look, voice, even in the minutest points of gesture and bearing, it was all that one could possibly imagine of the perfection of chivalrous respect." Eliza Lynn who often accompanied Landor on his daily visit to Ianthe when she was at Bath with her grandchildren, endorsed Forster's impression. Now "a bright good-humoured Irish face was all her beauty, but youth still lingered in her eyes and hair"—"she was sweet and gentle, evidently very proud of her old lover's affection, very fond of him, and somewhat afraid," and seeing Landor so "tender, respectful, playful, with his old-world courtesy which sat so well on him, it was easy to understand why she had loved him so passionately in the fresh far-away past, and why she loved him still in the worn and withered present."

Since he could no more hope to be buried beneath the mimosas she had planted at Fiesole, he fixed the site of his grave in Widcombe churchyard, because Ianthe had admired the spot in his company. Being several years her senior, he expected to die before her, but in August 1851 he wrote sadly to Forster:

I have lost my beloved friend of half a century, Jane the Countess de Molandé. She died at Versailles on the last of July after sixteen hours' illness. . . . She will be brought over to the family vault, in county Meath. . . . I hoped she might have seen my grave. Hers

I shall never see, but my thoughts will visit it often. Though other friends have died in other days (why cannot I help this running into verse?) One grave there is where memory sinks and stays.

Like all who live to advanced age, he learned to hear with resignation of the deaths of friends. Joseph Ablett, who died in January 1848, was the first of a steadily increasing sequence. Though his annual excursions to Llanbedr had lapsed some years before—apparently he had not been there since 1843, the year in which Ablett was repaid the purchase-money of the Fiesole property—Landor had intended to go that spring, with Forster as his fellow-guest, and he felt Ablett's death the more keenly for having too late delayed this last visit. He visited Llanbedr once more, however, at the request of Mrs. Ablett, who was involved in a dispute over the settlement of her husband's estate, and called him in as a friend who could testify to her husband's wishes. As a last duty to his dead friend, Landor zealously championed the interests of his widow, even printing at his own expense a *Statement of Occurrences at Llanbedr* in support of her case.

He was on this duty visit to Llanbedr in September 1849 when he wrote to Rose Graves-Sawle: "To lose so early a companion as Charles, and so kind a friend as poor Lady Blessington within so short a space of time bore heavily on my spirits." The death of his brother Charles deprived him of accompanying his sister from Warwick to family fraternising at Colton Rectory; Lady Blessington's death, following quickly upon her departure from Gore House, removed his most pleasant *pied-à-terre* in London and broke the regularity of his visits to town. Henceforth his London trips were limited to odd days, spent either at Dickens's home or Forster's lodgings, interposed between stays with Kenyon at Wimbledon and William Napier at Clapham; and though Dickens and Forster were his intimates, the homes of neither could offer the welcome he had so long enjoyed at Gore House, where his visits were like homecomings, his own room being kept for him, and his own special

seat between lilac trees on the terrace, to which he referred in the lines to his hostess's memory:

> White and dim-purple breath'd my favorite pair
> Under thy terrace, hospitable heart,
> Whom twenty summers more and more endear'd;
> Part on the Arno, part where every clime
> Sent its most graceful sons, to kiss thy hand. . . .

Glad to find his sister Elizabeth, in August 1849, "stronger and more active than ever she has been for these last forty years," he reflected that "now poor Charles, the stoutest of us all, is gone, I trust we shall follow in due succession." With Gore House a closed chapter, he no longer looked forward to his summer round of visits. Writing each year a letter of new year greetings to Rosenhagen, he repeated annually a doubt whether he would ever leave Bath again: "Within a month I am seventy seven years old and I seldom walk beyond the Crescent, never going to parties of any kind," he wrote in December 1851, and in the following year, "Age requires rest, and even a short journey discomposes me." Nevertheless, though he often delayed his departure from Bath till June or July, instead of leaving in May, he continued to enjoy two or three months of visiting every summer. In 1851, after a fortnight in London, he spent some days with Kenyon at Wimbledon before going to Lymington, the Hampshire estate of Mrs. Frederick West, whose husband, owner of Ruthin Castle, was Ablett's neighbour in Denbighshire. When Dickens visited him in November, Landor told him how he had intended to give a present to his godson, ten-year-old Walter Dickens—"Kenyon drove him about, by God, half the morning, under a most damnable pretence of taking him to where Walter was at school, and they never found the confounded house!"

In 1852 he divided the month of July between Kenyon at Wimbledon and Julius Hare at Hurstmonceaux; then, after five weeks at Warwick, he visited his widowed sister-in-law at Knowle, Rosenhagen at Cheltenham, and Robert at Birling-

ham. At Warwick, the news of D'Orsay's death "fell heavily tho' not unexpectedly," as he had heard of his illness—he had felt "consolation in the loss of Lady Blessington in the thought how unhappy she would have been had she survived him." His visit to Rosenhagen was his last; in one of his last letters to him, in June 1853, he mentioned the loss of "an old acquaintance, whom I had never seen for several years, Sir Charles Elton—he was my junior by two." Rosenhagen died in the following December, and caused Landor to reflect that "Merry Christmases . . . are mostly over with childhood," though, apart from this sadness and his upper teeth having become "as useless as the fleets in the Euxine," he was enjoying "perfectly good health."

In July 1853 he declared himself "so busy in correcting the proof sheets of a new volume for the benefit of the Madiai martyrs for their protestantism, that I have declined two invitations, and I doubt whether I shall be able to visit either Sir W. Molesworth or Archdeacon Hare." But he would not disappoint his sister Elizabeth, and his visit to Warwick in the following month proved to be his last. He was suffering from a bout of bronchitis, which now attacked him every winter, when he heard, in February 1854, of his sister's illness, and his brother Henry begged him "not to think of an attempt to make a journey here, which could not afford any relief or comfort to our afflicted Sister, and would be likely to give you increased pain, if indeed it did not lay you up." Henry promised that he would write to him daily, and assured him that, even if he and Robert went to Warwick, they would not be allowed to see their sister, who was so feeble that he himself had been forbidden by the doctor to enter her room. The old lady's death on 24th February had been some months expected, for the verses "On the Approach of a Sister's Death" actually appeared before the event, in *Last Fruit*. But the loss of his earliest friend and playmate grieved Landor none the less, and the natural inspiration to wistful reminiscence was intensified by his ill health and the death, during the same month, of his "earliest Bath friend," Bess Caldwell. "Alas," he wrote to Forster, "I feel that I am

gone very far down the vale of years: a vale in which there is no fine prospect on either side, and the few flowers are scarcely worth the gathering." On 24th March, a month after her death, he put into verse his sad thoughts of his sister:

> Sharp crocus wakes the froward year;
> In their old haunts birds reappear;
> From yonder elm, yet black with rain,
> The cushat looks deep down for grain
> Thrown on the gravel-walk; here comes
> The redbreast to the sill for crumbs.
> Fly off! fly off! I can not wait
> To welcome ye, as she of late.
> The earliest of my friends is gone.
> Alas! almost my only one!
> The few as dear, long wafted o'er,
> Await me on a sunnier shore.

And he told Forster how, on the balmy evenings of early summer, he walked in the park, and watching the sun glinting on the windows, reflected how "many of my old friends lived there, and went away in like manner, one after another."

With nobody to welcome him at Warwick, he could not bring himself to leave Bath that summer. "I have given up visiting, but many people come to see me, some of them from abroad," he wrote to Rashleigh Duke in October; "I would wish to see once more my old friend Archdeacon Hare, and Lord Dudley Stuart, which I had engaged to do in the present month, but the vis inertiae holds me down." He had seen both for the last time, for Stuart died in November, and Hare, who was almost exactly twenty years Landor's junior, on 23rd January. In his next letter to Duke, written in response to greetings on his eightieth birthday, he confessed himself "sadly deprest by the death of my dearest friend, Julius Hare, following so soon Lord Dudley Stuart's," and to Forster he lamented, "I am outliving all my friends, and it is time for me to go and join those who are gone before me. Already memory and strength are gone, and surely my days are numbered."

But even the sad letter to Duke, written while he was laid up with bronchitis, reflected a flash of characteristic assertiveness.

I have been confined to my room three entire weeks by the *whooping* cough. People talk idly, who say we can have it but once. I had it above seventy years ago.

In his last letter to Landor, on receiving the bitterly satirical conversation between *Pope Pio Nono and Cardinal Antonelli*, Hare wrote:

The great men of England seem to be passing away, those at least of that great generation whose youth was kindled and stirred by the first French Revolution. But one of them remains, my friend Walter Landor, and may he still remain as long as his spirit is not too impatient to escape from the decay of the body! It is perhaps well that the influence which first moved you to the resentment of injustice should be with you to the end. There are still so many painful things in the actual state of the world, so much wrong and so much folly, that it may probably be the duty of those who see these evils clearly, and feel the mischief of them strongly, to do all they can to expose and redress them. But it is the very pressure of such evils that makes *me* desire more earnestly to be borne away from them by some of those visions of beauty and tenderness which you in former times raised up for me, or by more of that intercourse with sages and heroes which led me not to the treasures of antiquity alone, but to those that lie in our own native speech.

In spite of lamenting his failing faculties, Landor continued to write with astonishing fertility. "He was always writing," declared Mrs. Lynn Linton: "he used to seem to be dozing, or looking out on vacancy lost in thought, when suddenly he would start up, seize a pen—one of the many blackened, scrubby, stumpy old swan quills that lay about the room—and write rapidly in his only half legible hand, throwing his paper into the ashes to dry."

In 1853 Moxon issued *Imaginary Conversations of Greeks*

and Romans, a half-guinea volume containing four new dialogues, besides all the classical conversations, carefully revised, contained in the *Collected Works*. The book was dedicated to Dickens, who wrote on 8th September his thanks for "a great dignity," for which "the Queen could give me none in exchange that I wouldn't laughingly snap my fingers at." Later in the same year, Moxon published the half-guinea volume of five hundred pages, the proceeds of which were to go to "the Madiai martyrs." It was dedicated to the Marchese d'Azeglio, an Italian patriot who opposed the political schemes of the Papacy and so recommended himself heartily to Landor. When Pius IX ascended the papal throne in 1846, his projected reforms in the temporal government of the papal states so excited Landor's enthusiasm that he dedicated his *Hellenics* to him. But when Pius accepted the French invasion of Italy in 1849, Landor violently attacked him in the *Examiner* as "an extremely weak, improvident man," who "vainly attempts to supply by cunning his deficiency of strength." In 1851, Chapman and Hall, to whom Forster was literary adviser, published, as a pamphlet priced eighteen pence, *Popery: British and Foreign*, in which Landor attacked Catholicism as trenchantly as he had attacked the Church of England in *Letters of a Conservative*. The same year he addressed to Cardinal Wiseman a series of letters in the *Examiner*—no mean examples of the killing ridicule of derisive irony—each ending, "Kissing the hem of the purple, I have the honor to be Your Eminence's devoted servant and A True Believer."

These, with eighteen imaginary conversations and many of his letters to the *Examiner*, comprised three parts of the miscellany volume; the fourth part consisted of occasional verse, mostly trifles originally enclosed in letters to friends. On the page facing the preface were printed the four famous lines, "I strove with none, for none was worth my strife," and the volume was entitled *The Last Fruit Off an Old Tree*. Not unnaturally, therefore, the book was received as Landor's *nunc dimittis*. So it was treated in *Blackwood's Magazine* for January

1854, a long and gracious review deciding that "the future literary historian of our age will devote a chapter apart, and not the least interesting one, to the works of Walter Savage Landor"—moving Landor to remark, "Blackwood, who always abused me, has said something grand about me, I hear." So, too, it was treated by Forster, who decided, with indecent haste, that the old man could not survive much longer, and having elected to write his biography, obtained possession of all Landor's valuable collection of letters from literary friends.

But Landor's vitality continued little abated. Though the "*vis inertiae*" restrained him from leaving Bath in the summer of 1854, he went up to London in 1855, stayed with Forster, and accompanied Sir William Napier on a visit to the Crystal Palace. On this occasion he met Bulwer's son, afterwards first Earl of Lytton, then making a poet's reputation as "Owen Meredith," who, writing from Italy when *Last Fruit* appeared, had exclaimed, "God bless him for what he says about the Madiai. That is a man I should greatly like to know." Lytton took this opportunity of obtaining an introduction through Forster, and Landor characteristically remarked of him, "None of the younger poets of the day breathes so high a spirit of poetry."

The old tree continued to blossom after the publication of *Last Fruit*. In 1854 Chapman and Hall published as a shilling pamphlet *Letters of an American, mainly on Russia and Revolution*, "edited" by Walter Savage Landor, with a prefatory letter addressed over his signature to Gladstone. Throughout the Crimean War, he wrote enough letters on politics and the conduct of the war to fill a volume—during the year 1855 few weeks passed without a letter from him in the *Atlas* or the *Examiner*. But he also found time for what Hare called his "visions of beauty and tenderness," and published in 1856, through Bradbury and Evans, the blank-verse dramatic scenes, *Antony and Octavius: Scenes for the Study*, of which Forster felt bound to admit that "rarely had anything better been done by this extraordinary old man than these dozen scenes in which he

had told again the ancient story of the two gamblers in ambition and love who threw between them for the stake of the world." In April of the same year, *Fraser's Magazine* included two new imaginary conversations, one of which, Alfieri and Metastasio, moved Carlyle to ask Forster, "Do you think the grand old Pagan wrote that piece just now? The sound of it is like the ring of Roman swords on the helmets of barbarians. An unsubduable old Roman!" *Antony and Octavius* was dedicated to Edward Capern, "poet and day-laborer at Bideford, Devon"; Landor believed that Capern wrote "wonderful poetry," obtained subscribers for his work and gave the profits of this book to him.

"I retain my health and am stronger than I was two years ago," he wrote within a few days of his eighty-first birthday. But in March 1856 he suffered a near bereavement from the death of his dog Pomero. "Everybody in this house grieves for Pomero," he told Forster: "the cat lies day and night upon his grave; and I will not disturb the kind creature, though I want to plant some violets upon it, and to have his epitaph placed around his little urn." Mrs. Crosse had been no great lover of Pomero, having found his frequent yapping an annoying disturbance to conversation, but on entering the little drawing-room at Rivers Street for the first time after his death, the silence of the room fell on her "like a reproach," and "the sight of the old man himself in his loneliness, sitting so still and quiet in his armchair, without even the distraction of his noisy little friend, was infinitely pathetic." The void in Landor's daily life may be gathered from Mrs. Lynn Linton's memories of Pomero. The dog was his inseparable companion, trotting at his heels on his walks, lying at his feet and barking at the passers-by as he sat in the park, encouraged in his noisiness by his master's boisterous manner of playing with him. When Pomero failed to return with him from a walk, Landor would refuse to eat his dinner and stamp about the room, raving that the dog was murdered, kidnapped, or pelted with stones, that he would go out and scour the city for him, that he would give a hundred

pounds, even his whole furtune, to anyone who brought him back alive. "He was always losing Pomero, and always giving some unprincipled scamp half-a-crown for his return," declared Mrs. Linton; "the dog must have been a settled source of income to someone, so frequently was he lost and so regularly returned."

It is significant that Landor's regular flow of letters to the press suddenly ceased in the autumn of 1856. Before he fell ill, he completed his interesting *Letter from W. S. Landor to R. W. Emerson*, replying to Emerson's remarks on himself in *English Traits*, which he had printed at his own expense and was reviewed in the *Athenaeum* of 29th November. Though he described himself as "confined to the house by somewhat of a bronchitis, not so bad, however, as that which afflicted me two winters ago," he wrote dolorously to Forster, "I have been out of doors not more than twice in fifty-nine days, a few minutes in each," and added, with his old spleen against English weather, "I think I will go and die in Italy, but not in my old home—it is pleasant to see the sun about one's deathbed." Knowing the state of his health, Forster was dismayed to hear that he had been summoned to give evidence in Bath county court "upon a miserable squabble about a governess."

The action was brought by the Rev. Morris Yescombe against Mr. John Webb Roche and his mother-in-law, all Bath residents, for abducting Louisa Koch, a governess, from the plaintiff's employ. Landor was called as a witness for the defendants, against whom the jury returned a verdict for harbouring Koch, though the damages were assessed at a farthing and no costs were allowed. It was such a squabble of petty malice as could only occur in the stilted society of a cathedral town, but Landor was so earnestly concerned that, in defiance of a doctor's certificate of his unfitness to appear, he insisted on going to the court. As a result of the excitement and exhausting effort, he became so ill that his brother Henry sent their niece, Kitty Landor, to attend him.

"I have known Mrs. Yescombe for years," wrote Augustus

Hare a year later, "and always prophesied that she would be the ruin of Mr. Landor some day." Mrs. Yescombe was an impecunious Irishwoman, who some twenty-two years before, had married a younger son of the third Lord Massy, a widower who conveniently died eleven months after the marriage. Three years later, she married the Rev. Yescombe, and her pretentiousness may be gauged from her insisting on styling herself on the strength of her former marriage, the Hon. Mrs. Yescombe. At Bath she evidently became one of those affectedly smart women, short of "pennies" and jealously snobbish about birth and breeding, who figure in the artificial society of every provincial town, and grow old in the daily more wearing struggle to preserve a bright fashionable pose and hide the haggard hopelessness which only her mirror beholds.

Landor was one of the town's institutions, and Mrs. Yescombe followed fashion in cultivating him with false flattery, professing exaggerated raptures over books which she had probably neither the intellect nor inclination to appreciate. Soon she realised how the old man's prodigal generosity and his weakness for enjoying the attentions of attractive young women might be utilised to her personal profit. In earlier life his prudent brother Henry had regarded Landor's grand contempt for money as an irritating pose; to him his elder brother had seemed almost criminally prodigal and flagrantly willing to make demands upon resources which others had worked hard to administer. This attitude of a lifetime was so settled in Henry that as late as the autumn of 1845, he replied with cold sarcasm to a well-intentioned, but impossible, proposition of Landor's for increasing the settlements on his younger children, and even accepted generous gifts of pictures to himself in deprecatory terms. But the eager generosity of an old man, who lived in lodgings and dressed like a tramp, while he allowed his wife and children enough to keep their carriage and the position of landed gentry, not only melted his old antagonism, but excited his jealous indignation lest his brother he imposed upon. When their sister Elizabeth bequeathed to him three hundred pounds

and Landor wanted to give it to his brother Charles's daughters (who already had £2000 each from their aunt), Henry forbade them to accept the gift, and writing himself to express their grateful acknowledgment, suggested that, if Landor wished "to give some memorial to our 2 Nieces, a Picture each from you out of the ten left by Eliz. to you would be very acceptable." Landor then insisted on surrendering his legacy to his son Arnold, whereupon Henry stated bluntly his opinion that "I think you were imprudent in giving it up, and your Son inconsiderate in accepting it," as "your age requires, & ought to have, additional attendance and comforts rather than those who are in the vigour of life & manhood." He was so exercised on his brother's behalf that he busied himself to arrange that Landor should receive an additional fifty pounds a year from the estate, and the following year, in spite of lamentations that his health was so impaired "that the least additional trouble overwhelms me" and "anxiety, or over-exertion, would probably produce Paralysis," he ventured himself on the long and tiresome journey to Llanthony to inspect personally the needs for repairs and development.

For most of his political writings, since they were published as letters to the editor, Landor received nothing, but he gave away all the proceeds from his books and magazine articles. "Never will I benefit myself by anything I write," he assured Mrs. Andrew Crosse, telling her that he had written—as a last tribute to his friend, who died in 1855—a review of Crosse's *Memorials* for the *National Magazine*, for which Forster was receiving on his behalf five pounds, "and gives it to two ladies left very poor." Hearing that Mrs. Lynn Linton, by her father's will, forfeited all her little patrimony by marriage, he wrote:

> On the first of April I shall receive my quarterly remittance, out of which I have only to pay thirty pounds for lodgings and servants, and ten to a poor pensioner of my sister. You see clearly that there will be something more than I ought to spend upon myself, and more than I will. Therefore do not be perverse and proud, but permit me to send you twenty in the beginning of April. Stick it

on the horn of the honey-moon before it goes: I mean the moon, not the money.

Mrs. Linton was not well off, and he frequently helped her, saying, "We must not either of us be too proud on these matters. We both have something better to be proud of—I chiefly in being called by you Father."

His benefactions among the poor of Bath, though unostentatious, were well-known within his intimate circle, and Mrs. Yescombe saw the means of lining her slender purse with pickings. She had in her household—either as a governess in succession to Miss Koch, or, more probably on those profitable terms by which middle-class daughters are initiated into polite society under experienced tutelage—a sixteen-year-old girl named Geraldine Hooper. She encouraged this girl to inspire in Landor such grandfatherly affection as he cherished for Rose Graves-Sawle and Mrs. Lynn Linton, and enlivened the old man's loneliness by playfully suggesting that he should play the part of Epicurus to the Ternissa of Geraldine and the skittishly middle-aged Leontion of herself.

In the pamphlet, *Walter Savage Landor and the Honourable Mrs. Yescombe*, which the indignant Landor rashly issued in June 1857, he charged her with four detected instances of misappropriation. His eyes were first opened to her character when she was arranging the publication of some music for Geraldine's benefit, and told him that the music publisher wanted twenty-three pounds. Landor "gave her instantly 15, all he had at hand, assuring her that the merit of her composition would readily bring the remainder." He was surprised when, a few days later, Geraldine came to him with a request for the eight pounds wanting, and going himself to the publishers, he found that "eight pounds was the whole of his demand, and had been paid."

He "ought to have been more cautious," he admitted in one draft of his *Defence*, for previously he had, in Mrs. Yescombe's presence, enclosed a five-pound note in a letter to "a poor sick woman in Cumberland."

Captain Brickman was present and offered to put it into the post office. She snatched it up, saying she would do it. . . . Of three thousand and more letters which in 17 or 18 years he had put into the Bath post office this alone miscarried.

Nevertheless he lent an ear to Mrs. Yescombe when, at the time of the Roche trial, she informed him that Geraldine Hooper, who had gone home to Cheltenham, "was so cruelly treated by her mother that it was probable she might run away, and altho she had relatives she might not take refuge with them after her flight." Just as he thought of his lost Pomero being possibly tortured or stoned to death, Landor saw in imagination this delicate girl of sixteen walking the streets or falling into the clutches of such a harpy as Hogarth's procuress in *The Harlot's Progress;* he "was in consternation at the idea, and gave an order on his banker for one hundred pounds and placed at Mrs. Yescombe's disposal a number of valuable pictures to be sold as necessity required." A hundred pounds was the utmost he had to give; he only had so much because his old friend Kenyon died in December 1856 and left him a legacy of that amount.

On 30th May following, Geraldine Hooper's father wrote to Landor:

I addressed two letters to the Rev. Morris Yescombe, requesting him to give me the information if possible, what my daughter had done with the 100 £ given to my daughter as a new year's gift, or otherwise relieve my daughter from the obligation of her promise made to Mrs. Yescombe, my daughter having stated that she was bound to secrecy to Mrs. Yescombe not to divulge the manner in which she disposed of it. The Rev. Mr. Yescombe never even replied to either of my letters; but on the evening of Saturday, May 23, I received a letter from his wife commencing thus: "As your inquiries concern me, *not my husband*, I answer them as follows. As regard the 100 £ *I never laid my eyes on it*, neither did I read *any note or letter containing such an inclosure. I know where a trifling sum was deposited*, but until your daughter sends me a note written by herself, authorizing me to do so, I shall not *divulge it!*"

Since I called in Rivers Street I have been engaged, both day and

night, in trying to discover how this money has been spent, and I am still pursuing my inquiries, well aware that I had paid all my dear child's bills, up to the very day she left us to join my family at Cheltenham, altho, in consequence of the very delicate state of her health, I have not pressed matters to the greatest extremity. Yet I have so far succeeded in obtaining the confidence of the dear child as to receive her confession, by this morning's post, that she gave fifty pounds of it to Mrs. Yescombe, to pay Mr. Slack's (her solicitor) bill for the trial Yescombe versus Roche.

I dare not speak at the present moment of my feelings toward these parties, and I am too much agitated to write more than the assurance that, at the time my innocent child was imposed upon, she was only sixteen years of age, and is at this moment very, very ill.

Whatever the father's feelings, Landor's may be imagined. Hooper's visit to him had apparently awakened him to the realisation that the fond affection between the girl and the middle-aged woman sprang from sexual perversion. In his drafted *Defence* he quoted the opening lines of a letter he received from the girl after her leaving Mrs. Yescombe:

My kind, my noble friend! Rejoice and be glad: the lost sheep is found and brought back to the fold. No longer will I hold intercourse with the ungodly. . . .

The affected sanctimony of tone in a girl of sixteen suggests that she was no very innocent juvenile, but Landor's anger was all against the older woman.

Ungodly! a lady who went constantly to church! Doctor Hooper well knows the cause of his niece's deplorable state of health and spirits, and why she calls her deluder *ungodly*.

He charged Mrs. Yescombe, in the presence of another lady, with her crimes against both the girl and himself, and declared that, falling on her knees before him, she implored him, "Don't ruin me! don't ruin me!"

He abstained and shunned her: so did Mr. Hooper, who was urged as a man and gentleman to prosecute her: Both were equally reluctant to bring the unhappy girl as witness in a criminal court.

But there were not wanting busybodies about Landor to talk righteously of his duty to expose a danger to local society, even of the necessity for a statement of facts to protect himself from the malicious gossip of Yescombe satellites. None of his close friends were at hand to reason with him; Mrs. Lynn Linton believed that the subsequent events would have been averted if she had "still been able to visit him, and make his lodgings his home, as in olden times." His indignation was inflamed by such items of gossip as Mrs. Yescombe's having committed petty theft in stealing seven shillings from a tradesman's counter; he was infuriated at having been imposed upon by one whose character, according to the gossips, was notorious. Therefore, immediately after receiving Hooper's letter, he rushed into print with a pamphlet. On 12th June a solicitor wrote on behalf of the Yescombes, threatening legal proceedings unless Landor withdrew and publicly apologised for his accusations. He replied with another pamphlet, *Mr. Landor Threatened*, beginning by publishing the solicitor's letter, with the remarks that "the writer's name is no invention by any author of farce, or comedy, or satire, but is really and truly Slack," and that "it would be unlawful to order a chairman to cudgel the fellow for his insolence." The Yescombes thereupon started proceedings for libel.

At this juncture, greatly fussed, Forster came down from town to take charge. In his discreet account of the affair, he is at pains to emphasise Landor's infirmity of health:

> The last illness of the old man, while it had left him subject to the same transitory storms of frantic passion, had permanently also weakened him, mentally yet more than bodily; . . . even when anger was no longer present to overcloud his intellect, there had ceased to be really available to his use such a faculty of discrimination between right and wrong, or such a saving consciousness of

evil from good, as is necessary to constitute a responsible human being. He had now not even the memory enough to recollect what he was writing from day to day; and while the power of giving keen and clear expression to every passing mood of bitterness remained to him, his reason had too far deserted him to leave it other than a fatal gift.

Landor had been so ill that on 22nd May, about ten days before he received Hooper's letter, he was persuaded by his niece Kitty to draft his will and send it to his brother Henry. In the covering letter he wrote:

> The last three winters I have suffered much illness, and do not expect to live through another. We shall never meet again. You are now the last of my family. . . . If the Will requires altering, I do not think it worth the trouble. Throw it away or tear it up. I am quite indifferent in regard to all property, and, God knows, I do not care a straw whether I live or die. . . .

The letter reached Henry when he was staying at Birlingham, and Robert, who was so crippled with gout that he could "hardly walk down stairs," but immensely proud of an activity which had enabled him to require his curate to take Sunday service "only six times in fourteen months," wrote on 5th June to their Rugeley cousin:

> A letter from Walter made us both merry for some minutes. It contained Walter's Will, and began by saying that he and Henry were now left alone—were the last of the Family—that all the rest were gone. Yet was the Letter sent to him *here*. I, in return, sent some flowers with my blessing—as his Uncle Robert. He has no distinct notion that I may not be his grandfather, yet can he write freshly and fiercely, and knows more about Athens as it was 2,500 years ago than you and I our knowledge together.

Despite its grammatical decrepitude and cackling senility, Robert's letter may be reckoned as endorsing Forster's account of Landor's mental state. Yet the drafted will is characteristic alike in its terseness, directness, and explosive contempt of hum-

bug.[1] The directions for his funeral—that, never having "indulged in maskerades or other such buffooneries," he desired "no magpie colors" on his coffin and "no rogues with staves at the side of it"—are true Landor, such as he might have written at any time of his life—when, at twenty-five, he was per-

[1] Dated 22 May 1857, the draft reads:

This is the last Will and Testament of
Walter Savage Landor

My estates, and all other my property, in Warwickshire, Staffordshire, Monmouthshire, and elsewhere, being in entail or in settlement, I have few articles to bequeath. Of these I dispose as follows.

The minatures of Jane Sophia Countess de Molandé, and of her daughter Maria Sodre de Pereira, and of her grandaughter Luisinha, to William Swift, Esquire of Whitechurch Lodge, Rathfarnham, Dublin.

All my books, busts, the statue of Saint Peter in maple wood by Lorenzo Ghiberti, and all my pictures to my son Arnold Savage Landor, who will preserve as heirlooms such as I may indicate, and sell the rest by auction for the benefit of these public Charities in Bath; namely

To the Bath Hospital £10.10.0
To the United Hospital £10.10.0
To the Bath Penitentiary £20.0.0
To the Refuge for the Destitute £10.10.0

I leave ten shillings to be paid yearly to the most studious boy of good conduct, in the school at Tachbrook, Warwicks.

All my writings and letters I place at the disposal of my learned and most highly esteemed friend, John Forster, Esq. of Lincolns Inn.

As I never indulged in maskerades or other such buffooneries, so I desire that nothing of the kind may be exhibited about me at the close of life. Let there be no magpie colors of black and white upon my coffin; no rogues with staves at the side of it. Death having been beforehand in the business, they cannot stave him off. Let the children play about me as they used to do, and let six chairmen carry me, on tressel or otherwise, and each receive ten shillings for his trouble, which will not be much, as I order that the coffin have no lead in it. I would lie near the tower of Widcombe Church, facing Prior Park. We all go in the same Omnibus to the same terminus: we ought all to have the same accomodation, and to pay the same fare.

In this my last Will and Testament no mention is made of my beloved and ever affectionate children, Julia, Walter and Charles, because, in addition to what is theirs already, their elder brother, Arnold, in consideration of divers farms added by me to the estates, and of farmhouses built, and of roads to the extent of eight miles made by me, and of timber trees of old growth left standing, and others to the amount of several hundred thousands planted by me, has consented to pay to each of them, on the demise of their mother, an annuity of one hundred pounds, in half yearly payments, commencing six months at farthest, after my decease.

Signed Walter Savage Landor in the presence of and in the presence of each other Catherine M. Landor, 3 Belmont, Bath. John Charles Hughes Nr 8 Edward Street Bath

I hereby appoint my brother Henry Eyres Landor to be my Executor with or without any other, as he will.

22 May 1857 C. M. Landor
J. C. Hughes.

suaded by Mocatta to suppress the *Postscript to Gebir;* when, at thirty-seven, he wrathfully exposed Beaufort to Lord Chancellor Eldon; when, at fifty, he raged over Taylor's "bowdlerising" of the *Imaginary Conversations,* or, at sixty-one, he published *A Satire on Satirists* and *Letters of a Conservative.* Nor can it be contested that the expression of indignation against Mrs. Yescombe in pamphlets was not true to character. The writer of the Yescombe pamphlets was the same Landor who had distributed handbills about Fred Betham at Usk; he spoke no more than truth in declaring that only reluctance to put a young girl in the witness-box deterred him from proceedings against Mrs. Yescombe.

In the Yescombes' affair, Landor's only deviation from characteristic conduct, the only evidence suggesting that his old force was enfeebled, lay in his sole act which won Forster's approval. He allowed Forster to prevail on him to sign a written apology and an undertaking "not to repeat anything of the kind again," so inducing the Yescombes to stay proceedings. He was persuaded against his will, for Forster admitted that only his persuasion prevented Landor from defying the Yescombes, placing his property beyond the power of seizure for damages, breaking up his home, selling his pictures, and returning to Italy.

According to his lights, Forster acted in Landor's best interests. He was as intensely respectable as he was officious; his respectability and officiousness were soon to irritate Dickens into the cruel caricature of Podsnap in *Our Mutual Friend.* To him the whole affair was uncomfortably distasteful. Even if Landor escaped from the lawsuit without mud clinging from Mrs. Yescombe's throwing, he would have stood revealed as a credulous old man, senilely susceptible, an object for tittering ridicule. Forster decently shuddered at the possibility of such degradation to "the dignity of literature," of which he regarded himself a leading custodian. He was concerned simply for Landor's reputation as a veteran of letters; as a member of the frock-coated upper middle-class which was to rule England for the

next three generations, he could conceive no sane person as willing to risk the dignity of respectable reputation for a moral issue. That Landor wanted to do so convinced Forster that his intellect was clouded—that he was incapable of "discrimination between right and wrong."

Forster declared himself "painfully affected" by a further change in Landor—"he had so long and steadily consented to act on my advice exclusively in the publication of his writings, that here I believed I had still some efficient control," but "unhappily it proved to be not so." After his sister Elizabeth's death, there were found among her papers early verses of Landor's which she had treasured in manuscript for more than half a century, such as the lines *Written at Malvern, June 1799,* on his *Voyage to St. Ives from Port Einon* in 1794, and to *St. Clair* of 1796. Friends like Rose Graves-Sawle had shown such interest in these that he conceived the idea of printing a volume containing these early efforts including a selection from his long-forgotten *Poems from the Arabic and Persian,* along with the occasional verses he had written since *Last Fruit.* His letters show that he was preparing the volume as early as the autumn of 1856, for he was asking Rose Graves-Sawle and Mrs. Lynn Linton to send him scraps of verses, of which he had kept no copy, and he had actually given much of the material to Mrs. Yescombe for her to transcribe a fair copy for the printer. Apparently Forster first heard of the projected volume when Landor told him, among his grievances against Mrs. Yescombe, that he had only recovered his manuscripts from her after publicly advertising their unauthorised detention, and immediately concluding that the old man would be unable to resist the temptation to explode his spleen in print, he deprecated its publication.

Forster inferred that Landor had always previously accepted his advice, but he had never before had to deal with him when his personal feelings were engaged. As an aggrieved London cabman described him, Forster was "a harbitrary cove," but hitherto he had treated Landor with the affectionate respect of

a young man eager to be useful to an illustrious senior. Irritated by Landor's rashness and a little contemptuous of his impaired faculties, now for the first time he assumed towards him the brusque dictatorial air and "supercilious tone" which Dickens resented as giving "the idea that he was the patron, or padrone." Landor was the last person to receive such treatment meekly. Moreover, as Macready's diary amusingly illustrates, Forster rarely scrupled to mask an opinion with tact; without discrimination, he described Landor's materials for this volume as "the mere sweepings and refuse of his writing-desk," and probably he did not hesitate to hint his opinion to the old man.

As Browning was soon to discover, Landor was easily managed by conciliatory methods, but he reacted against Forster's dictatorial tactics. Having swallowed a bitter pill in apologising to the Yescombes, Landor obstinately refused further concession to Forster. He grieved to do anything against Forster's advice, he said—he had himself no exaggerated opinion of his verses, and when Rose Graves-Sawle wrote compliments after the book's publication, he remarked, "For the greater part of my last poems I want pardon rather than praise"—but among the manuscripts rescued from Mrs. Yescombe were some foolish scraps of verse written for her entertainment and the fair Geraldine's, and he argued that, if he did not publish them and thereby show that he was unashamed of them, Mrs. Yescombe might do so to ridicule him as a hoary lecher. Forster argued, Landor persisted, and Forster lost his temper, as he always did when crossed; he left Bath in September 1857, having refused to find a London publisher to undertake the volume.

Unabashed, Landor immediately commissioned an Edinburgh publisher named Nichol to publish it. The old tree having already borne its *Last Fruit*, he at first proposed to call this book *Dry Leaves*, but finally decided on *Dry Sticks, Fagoted by Walter Savage Landor*. Only with difficulty his publisher persuaded him against insisting on the title reading "Fagoted by *the late* W. S. Landor," pleading that the description would give pain to his friends. Forster cited his notion as "evidence

of the strange state of Landor's mind at the moment," but he was actually so ill that there was a possibility of his death before the book's publication. What he conceived to be rheumatism in the right side and shoulder was probably a slight stroke, threatening paralysis; he did not venture out of doors, and only "with extreme difficulty do I weigh myself up from my armchair." When his doctor declared that his constitution would bear him through, he said, "The same spasms, in that case, will come over again some other time, and I wish it were all at an end now."

Forster labours to convince that "age and illness had conquered him at last, and left him other than the Landor 'whom we knew,' " in an effort to explain how *Dry Sticks* came to contain some verses reviling Mrs. Yescombe. He affected to believe that Landor had given him a definite undertaking not to refer again to the Yescombes in print, and deliberately withheld from him the proofs of the book because he had broken his promise. But Landor obviously considered that, since Forster had refused his usual services in seeing the book through the press, he was under no obligation to show him the proofs. As to any undertaking, he believed with justice that Forster had placed him in a false position by persuading him to apologise to the Yescombes, and fretting over this, he published the verses against Mrs. Yescombe as salve to his conscience. Clearly he published them with settled intent, for he resisted the advice of both his solicitors and his friend Brickman, who were requested by Forster to insure the erasure of all offensive matter.

Soon after the publication of *Dry Sticks* in the new year of 1858, Forster's Bath friends "heard whispers of another contemplated action for libel." The story of Mrs. Yescombe's stealing from a tradesman's counter was told in metrical dialogue between a lady, an old woman, and a policeman; in "The Pilfered to the Pilferer" figured the stealing of "that poor nurse's lost five-pound" by "Mother Pestcome;" Mrs. Yescombe was readily identified as Caina, the heroine of some crude anathemae in Martial's manner, and her husband with "my reverend friend's rare piety." In his *Defence* Landor gibed that action

was brought against him only after he was seized with apoplexy. He had the warning symptoms of high blood pressure, for while his doctor declared that he looked so well that there was "no reason why I should not live another ten years," Landor complained, "Why cannot this swimming of the head carry me to the grave a little more rapidly?" Two months later, at the end of March, his niece Kitty was hurriedly sent for when he was found unconscious one morning. He remained so for twenty-four hours, and his condition was considered dangerous for about a week. But, as he had remarked in the previous autumn, "surely I must be made of iron all but the heart." His amazing constitution enabled a remarkably quick recovery; in May his brother Henry wrote to congratulate him, and he himself wrote jocularly to Forster:

> I take it uncivil in Death to invite and then to balk me. It was troublesome to walk back, when I found he would not take me in. I do hope and trust he will never play me the same trick again. We ought both of us to be graver.

At the end of the month, he was well enough to take a drive: he visited his proposed grave at Widcombe, and returned "less fatigued than I expected."

He was in this state of convalescence when the Yescombes had him served with a writ for libel. So far from suffering a relapse his vitality asserted itself to meet the crisis. Advised by his lawyers that an adverse verdict was likely, and that damages might be the heavier on account of the breach of the undertaking dictated by Forster, he decided on his original plan—to settle all his property on his eldest son, sell his furnishings, and once more take refuge from the law in exile, as he had done forty-four years earlier. On 12th July, Forster was amazed to receive a telegram announcing Landor's arrival that night in London, accompanied by his niece. He had friends dining that evening, among them Dickens, who, guessing that the old man would be too tired to join the party, went up to his room to

greet him. He expected Landor to be full of indignation against his persecutors, but returned laughing to the other guests, saying that "he found him very jovial, and his whole conversation was upon the characters of Catullus, Tibullus, and other Latin poets."

Landor left England fully conscious that he would never return. From Boulogne he wrote to Rose Graves-Sawle on 23rd July:

> In leaving England for ever, the heaviest of my sorrows is that I shall never see you again. I shall retain in my inmost heart the grateful memory of your kindness and compassion. How is it possible that I could ever forget the comfort you gave me, when circumstances made it impossible for me to remain in Italy.

He confessed that he felt "some vexation to part with my pictures," but the loss of these and his friends were all his regrets; there was grandeur in the serenity with which the unrepentant rebel faced exile at eighty-three, having pulled up his roots for the third time in his long life.

CHAPTER XV

LAST EXILE

§ 1

At Bristol on 23rd August 1858, before Baron Channell and a jury, the Yescombes sued Landor on three counts for libel, and on another for breach of agreement. The libels were all verses published in *Dry Sticks*—"To Caina," "The Pilfered to the Pilferer," and "Canidia and Caina." The last was a couplet:

> Canidia shared her prey with owls and foxes,
> The daintier Caina feeds from letter boxes.

In Dante's *Inferno,* Caina is a region of hell reserved for slayers of relatives; without the circumstantial evidence of the pamphlets, there was nothing to identify Caina with Mrs. Yescombe. But "The Pilfered to the Pilferer," beside apostrophising "Mother Pestcome" as thief and liar, contains allusion to sex perversion between Mrs. Yescombe and her *protégée:*

> Tho' you've made her pale and thin
> As the child of Death by Sin,
> When you've done with Caroline
> Bid her for a night be mine;
> You shall have her all the day
> Following, to repeat our play.

"Child of Death by Sin" refers to Milton's allegory in *Paradise Lost* of Sin's incest with Death, and Landor told George Jacob

Holyoake that the plaintiff's lawyer, being ignorant of the allusion, inserted a comma after the word "Death," so making the text suggest that Mother Pestcome had made Caroline pale and thin by her own sinfulness. Landor believed—and one juryman was reported to have said—that the correct reading "would have altered the case, and, of course, the verdict."

The jury gave a verdict for the plaintiffs. With the circumstantial evidence of the pamphlets, they could hardly have done otherwise, but the damages awarded—£750 for the three libels, and £250 for the breach of agreement—seem both disproportionate and excessive. No extenuating account seems to have been taken of the plaintiffs' reputations, either from the evidence of the Roche case or of the Bath tradesmen—as Landor remarked to Holyoake, "no action was brought against the tradesmen for their reports, which I twice published." The newspapers were not, of course, concerned with the rights of the matter. As the worldly Forster had foreseen, such a paltry squabble was bound to bring discredit upon Landor's reputation; as a famous writer, Landor was "news," while nobody outside Bath cared a rap for the Yescombes. The *Times* voiced the popular verdict of massed self-righteousness:

> How ineffable the disgrace to a man of Mr. Landor's ability and reputation at the close of a long life to be mixed up with so disgraceful a transaction. A slanderer—and the slanderer of a lady—a writer of anonymous letters, and these letters reeking with the foulest odours of the dirtiest slums—a violator of his pledged word—who is it to whom these words must now be applied?

"What a bombardment of indignant articles and fusillade of scandalized paragraphs he is enduring just now!" exclaimed Browning to Isa Blagden, and having expressed his grief for Landor, proceeded to a diagnosis of the affair which would have wounded Landor more than condemnation.

> Such writing is wholly indefensible on his part, no doubt; and he is no more in his dotage than you or I—but it pricks the nerve

of one to feel that in some quite inexplicable way, the great old man was foolish enough to believe he did God service in so writing: I can't imagine how he fails to see the cowardice in the act of publication: if he thinks these abominations of anybody, why not be content to stand alone in his belief—why call on us all to help him with our opinion and sympathy?—and yet, as a coward he certainly is *not*—one ends as one begins—by repeating . . . inexplicable. However, I, for one, am profoundly grateful to the author of the "Conversations" and would not abuse him as all these wretched catch-penny "Presses," "John Bulls," and the like, do just now, if he had libelled *me*.

Middle-class respectability in Browning blinded him to the passion for justice inspiring Landor; resentful of Landor's indelicacy as of a bad smell, Forsyteism aggrievedly conceived him as asking its "sympathy," as an offender, instead of seeking to rouse its indignation, as an accuser.

Samuel Carter Hall and fellow Pecksniffs were delighted to sneer at "a nasty old man tottering on the brink of the grave," and Dickens thus rebuked his sister-in-law, Georgina Hogarth:

> You must not let the new idea of poor dear Landor efface the former image of the fine old man. I wouldn't blot him out, in his tender gallantry, as he sat upon that bed at Forster's that night, for a million of wild mistakes at eighty years of age.

Like Browning, Dickens's warmth of heart preserved his loyalty to friendship, but even less than Browning he attempted to recognise more than an unhappy aberration of senility. With the generosity of youth, Augustus Hare felt "there is much, which the world does not know, to be said on his side," while echoing Dickens with "Whatever his faults are, . . . we who have known him well must draw a veil for ourselves over the failings of his old age, and remember only the many kind words of the dear old man, so tender in heart and so fastidious in taste, the many good and generous acts of his long life, and how many they are."

Of all his friends, Mrs. Lynn Linton alone tried to take up the cudgels publicly on Landor's behalf. Bitterly reproaching

herself that her preoccupation with newly married life had interrupted her devoted attentions to her adoptive father, she urged Forster to help her with a defence. But Forster, the inspirer of the disingenuous apology which had placed Landor in an indefensibly false position, was only eager to lose discomfort in forgetfulness. "It is very sad," he observed pompously, "and I am as helpless as yourself, though not less anxious than yourself to do what yet I feel is hardly to be done." He wrote to Landor's nieces and his friend Brickman, in half-hearted hope of obtaining materials for "a brief public statement." Apparently unaware that his appeals might be construed as countenancing guilt, he used his influence with sections of the press to secure their promises of silence on the subject. "The saddest thing remains," he declared with heartfelt honesty, "that the occurrence should have taken place at all," but he concluded with piety scant in sincerity:

> The worst evil is nevertheless not without its admixture of good in this mystery of a world. And I pray now that our noble old Landor . . . may live quietly the rest of his days in Italy, and die with his children.

§ 2

Forster had ever more tenacity than imagination. Twenty years before, without any personal acquaintance with Mrs. Landor, he had been insistent in advising Landor's return to her. Fondly imagining the old man's death-bed surrounded by an affectionate family, he soothed his present wounded conceit with the thought of how he would be enabled to point out that, had that early advice been heeded, Landor might have enjoyed such family affection during the twenty years spent in loneliness at Bath.

None but Forster could have doubted the nature of Landor's welcome at Fiesole. After twenty-three years of bitter feelings, during which they had corresponded only through third par-

ties, husband and wife met again in the house where they had parted. Landor saw a gaunt woman of sixty-four, her golden hair now grey, her features haggard and coarsened by a degraded way of life, looking the part of the "unnatural mother" he had reviled in verse. She saw no longer the alert, leonine figure, so strong and proudly erect in the magnificent preservation of his sixty years, but a bent and gnarled old man of eighty-three, with dishevelled white wisps fringing massive baldness and heavily lined face, shabby and dirty of dress—forlorn and decrepit, driven to her for refuge from the results of what she had always called his "madness."

Not to her Landor looked for shelter, but to his children—for had he not ever behaved to them with lavish generosity, till, by his last act in England, he had signed away the last of his property and left himself dependent on their charity? But his sons, no longer boys, were men between thirty and forty, settled in the easy habits of a loose household, consorting with the scum of Florence, without ambition beyond the indulgence of animal pleasures. Boyish affection for their Babbo was long forgotten; they had never thought of their father except as the source of their incomes, and had for some years expected news of his death, which would bring to them their full inheritance. They looked askance at his unexpected appearance, and realising that, though bent with age, he showed no immediate signs of dying, resented the encumbrance of his presence. As for his daughter, she was now a soured, soiled spinster of middle-age, despised as such by her mother and brothers, and she fastened upon her father the responsibility for her condition because he had failed to supply the financial bait necessary for catching the French count.

Landor had not intended to live at Fiesole. "I had designed Nervi for my residence," he wrote, "and my pictures and books were consequently directed to Genoa, near that place." But his nieces had written alarming accounts of his feeble health to his sons, who, fearing the possibility of his death among strangers and the consequent scandal which would attach to themselves,

invited him to Fiesole. They were prepared to tolerate his presence as an invalid lodger, but he quickly revealed that neither age nor illness had abated his capacity for resentment. Soon after his arrival, annoyed with his old acquaintance Lord Normanby, for "your lordship's rude reception of me at the Cascine, in presence of my family and innumerable Florentines," he wrote:

> We are both of us old men, my lord, and are verging on decrepitude and imbecility, else my note might be more energetic. You by the favour of a minister are Marquis of Normanby, I by the grace of God am
>
> Walter Savage Landor.

In reply to this explosion he received "a very kind note," which left no doubt that Normanby had intended no slight upon Landor himself, but was not in the habit of acknowledging members of his family. Mrs. Landor was socially ostracised, and Landor afterwards remarked how "the bishop of Jamaica, Admiral Erskine, Sandford, and several others, who called on me, never enquired about her; they knew enough; nor did Arnold once make his appearance."

After his arrival at the villa, "scarcely a week had elapsed," declared Landor, "before Walter gave me to understand that the place was no longer mine." His proud spirit could not brook such treatment meekly, and a state of hostility developed between him and the household. Repeatedly he wrote to Forster, complaining of his family's conduct towards him and asking if his brother Henry could make some arrangement to provide him with a sufficient income to live alone in lodgings. But Forster regarded these explosively emotional letters as confirming "the impression as to his mental state" conceived during the Yescombe affair, and ignored his appeals. He was, however, shocked into communication with Henry Landor when he heard, towards Christmas, that Landor had left the villa for lodgings in Florence.

Before Forster could conclude any arrangements, he heard that Landor was back at Fiesole. The old man had no money,

and his sons were driven by dread of local gossip to prevail on him to return. More trouble ensued. The Yescombes having instituted proceedings to set aside the deed transferring Landor's property and to recover the amount of damages and costs, the court of chancery granted an injunction against the payment of rents from the estate till the case was settled. This obliged Arnold to settle with the Yescombes—which he eventually did—unless he chose to go short of his rents. The family felt bitterness against Landor as the cause of this trouble, while he, according to Mrs. Landor, threatened to stab himself if they satisfied the Yescombes.

Again he left the villa in a rage, and again he had to return for lack of money. Approached by Forster, Henry Landor naturally retorted that it was Arnold's duty to provide for his father, to whom he owed everything. Apparently arguing that his father was no longer responsible for his actions, Arnold refused to give him an allowance, and compelling him to accept shelter at the villa, there treated him as unworthy of consideration. Describing the humiliations he suffered, Landor wrote to Arthur Walker:

> My feet are tender, as old men's are generally, and I propose to give him a roller to smoothen the loose and sharp gravel. He and his mother told me that the rain would not then run off. Yet you know it lies twenty five feet above the ground below. But he ordered the only walk I could use to be broken up. On this I left the house the day after, without a single word of remonstrance and without obtaining permission to remove the whitewash from the lions' heads over the garden gate, which a few days before had partly covered them, to annoy me, as I must see them from my study table, ten paces off. When I was extremely ill, and kept my bed, I earnestly begged that I might have put up a bell within reach. Even this was not permitted, on the plea that a picture must be removed.

He emphasised that "I left without a word of reproach, but was assailed by Mrs. L. in language such as a prostitute could scarcely assail a thief with." He left as suddenly, following an outburst

by his wife, as he had left twenty-four years before, but this time he forgot to request the use of his wife's carriage. It was noon on a hot June day, he had only "some 15 pauls in his pocket," and after stumbling along the burning lane to Florence, he was at the point of exhaustion when he had the luck to run into Browning, then living at Casa Guidi. Browning took charge of him, and conscious that Mrs. Browning might not welcome him as a guest, lodged him at an hotel, while he opened negotiations with Fiesole and correspondence with Forster.

Resolutely Landor refused to return to Fiesole; he preferred "any two rooms, with simple board, to living with his family." But, while Browning was waiting to hear from Forster whether money would be forthcoming from his brother Henry, his sensitive delicacy made him aware that he was an embarrassment to his benefactor. Some years before, the American painter, William Wetmore Story, had come to Bath, armed with an introduction from Kenyon; and Landor's cordial hospitality was the brightest memory of his stay. Story was a friend of Browning's, and remembering that he owed him a debt of hospitality, Landor wrote to him:

> My friends the Brownings tell me that you are residing in Siena. This is a great inducement for me to take a house for a year in that city. My family are in possession of the most charming villa and grounds within two miles of Florence, which I very imprudently gave entirely up to them, with a large income, reserving for myself extremely little, so I am constrained to be economical.

Story promptly invited him to be his guest till he settled on a home of his own, and one July day Browning escorted him to Siena. He looked "travel-stained and weak," and Story's daughter remembered "the feeling of pity that swelled in my heart as I looked on this old gentleman, and recalled what my father had said of him"—how he admired him as "a master of the noblest English," and at Bath he had been "altogether most brilliant and entertaining." As Story said, "it was the case of old Lear over again."

He remained Story's guest for more than a month. After a week or two, his delicacy began to suffer qualms lest he should out-stay his welcome, and he talked about leaving for Viareggio. But Browning, who had returned to Florence, wrote begging Story to "prevent him doing anything so foolish," and the Storys, who entertained him gladly as "our honoured and cherished guest," easily persuaded him to remain with them. "During the time he was with us," wrote Mrs. Story, "his courtesy and high breeding never failed him; he was touchingly pleased and happy with our life, and so delightful and amusing that we ourselves grieved when it came to an end." Every morning he rose before even the servants were astir, and was found seated in the garden, busily writing Latin verses, which he read to Story at breakfast. After breakfast he gave Story's daughter her first lessons in Latin, and then recited to her passages from his favourite poets; he fired her enthusiasm for Keats, whom he declared "the greatest poet the world ever saw." With Story he strolled about the garden, discussing its beauties—"both had the same feeling about not plucking flowers."

He entertained Mrs. Story mainly with reminiscences, of which she kept a record. "His memory for the far distant time was extraordinary; . . . while the 'middle distance' was lost in a cloud and the foreground, the present immediately about us, appeared to make little impression on him." He had long worried over the failings of his once marvellous memory; "he was the most impatient man with himself I ever saw," said Story—"he was furious if he did not remember at once any passage of a book, or any name, or date, and would immediately begin to abuse himself, crying out in his sharp, high voice, 'God bless my soul! I am losing my mind, I am getting old!' "

When the Brownings arrived to spend the month of August at a neighbouring villa, Mrs. Browning found "the quiet of this place has so restored his health and peace of mind that he is able to write awful Latin alcaics, to say nothing of hexameters and pentameters, on the wickedness of Louis Napoleon." He never missed a chance of exploding against Louis Napoleon, and

Story's daughter remembered how "Mrs. Browning, with her face hidden under her large hat and curls, would be stirred past endurance by these assaults upon her hero who was her 'Emperor evermore,' and would raise her treble voice even to a shrill pitch in protest, until Mr. Browning would come into the fray as mediator."

Browning brought with him to Siena a rough linen bag containing the clothes left by Landor at Fiesole. He had been asked by Landor to obtain them through the police, but having written in "a mildly gruff way" to Mrs. Landor, he received a visit from her, "all butter and honey (save an occasional wasp's sting overlooked in the latter when she occasionally designated our friend as 'the old Brute!')." Landor also asked him to obtain from Arnold "whatever may remain out of the £110 left with him, after paying what he proposed I should pay for my board and other expenses, of which his mother told me he kept an account to a *quadrino!*" The account was duly submitted through Landor's old friend Kirkup, who assisted Browning in negotiations with Fiesole and who, among "sundry flowers of language" about the account, told Browning that "such a beastly mess he never saw!"

On hearing from Browning, Forster was conscience-stricken at his neglect of Landor's appeals, and replied "energetically," begging Browning to do everything for Landor till he himself could represent the state of affairs to Landor's brothers. These representations were delayed by the illness of Walter Landor of Rugeley, the agent to the estate, but meanwhile, Browning told Story that Forster "energetically bids me hold *himself* responsible for all expense, insists on Landor's finding every comfort, an attendant, and other assistance . . . but adds that he is sure there will be no need of any such effort on the part of any friend, as the brothers of Landor . . . are most 'noble, honourable gentlemen, and wealthy to boot, and will never bear indignity to their family's head.' " Having also received a "satisfactory" letter from Landor's niece Sophy—he gathered that "they have all been under the delusion that the Fiesole people used

the greatest kindness to our poor friend"—Browning lost no time, on his arrival at Siena, in establishing Landor in a cottage near his own villa. Landor had moved in on 6th August, when he wrote to Forster, heaping on him coals of fire in his expressions of gratitude to Browning, "who made me the voluntary offer of the money I wanted, and who insists on managing my affairs here, and paying for my lodgings and sustenance. Never was such generosity and such solicitude as this incomparable man has shown in my behalf."

Browning wrote reassuring reports of Landor to Forster. The Storys told him that, while they noted "inequalities of temper in him," these were "not affecting themselves," and "he may be managed with the greatest ease by 'civility' alone." Story's verdict to an American friend, written at the end of Landor's stay with him, conveyed an impression which might have been recorded at any period of Landor's life—"We have found him most amiable and interesting, with certain streaks of madness running through his opinions, but frank and earnest of nature and a hater of injustice." Remarking on his moderate wants, his remarkable evenness of temper, and his gentleness and readiness to be advised, Browning described his conduct as "faultless;" "his thankfulness for the least attention, and anxiety to return it, are almost affecting," and "he leads a life of the utmost simplicity." Apart from the hours spent busily writing in his cottage garden, he divided his time between the Brownings and the Storys. The women of both households were charmed by him; he delighted Story's daughter by wearing, in honour of her birthday, a flowered waistcoat given to him by D'Orsay, and even Mrs. Browning wrote affectionately of "how well he looks in his curly white beard!" He allowed his beard to grow while staying with Story, who drew sketches of him before and after the growing; later he sent Rose Graves-Sawle's little daughter "a kiss thro' a beard as long as a Jew's."

Advised by Forster of the happenings at Fiesole, Landor's brothers agreed to allow him two hundred pounds a year, with a further fifty held in reserve for special expenses. Henry Lan-

dor showed his displeasure at the conduct of Landor's children towards their father by revoking a legacy of £2000 he had intended for Julia. Browning decided that Landor was "wholly unfit to be anything but the recipient of the necessary money's worth, rather than the money itself," and as Landor fortunately professed to have the same conviction, Browning elected to administer his allowance and submit to his brothers a quarterly account "duly examined and certified by Kirkup." Believing that Landor needed a trustworthy and tactful attendant, he engaged Mrs. Browning's former maid Wilson, who was married to an Italian named Romagnoli, and when, at the beginning of December 1859, the Brownings and the Storys went to Rome for the winter, Landor moved into a small house in the Via Nunziatina at Florence, not far from the Brownings' home. So, within two months of his eighty-fifth birthday, the head of his family came to live in cheap lodgings within an hour's walk of his children's home at the beautiful villa of which Ablett's generosity had made him master twenty-eight years before.

§ 3

At No. 2671 Via Nunziatina, Landor had a sitting-room, bedroom, and dining-room, all communicating, on the first floor. Below were rooms for Mrs. Wilson-Romagnoli and a maidservant; a small garden was attached. Landor, reported Browning, seemed to like Mrs. Romagnoli,

> but there is some inexplicable fault in his temper, whether natural or acquired, which seems to render him very difficult to manage. He forgets, misconceives, and makes no endeavour to be just, or indeed rational; and this in matters so infinitely petty that there is no providing against them.

Mrs. Story declared that, "on the very day of his arrival he in a fit of anger with his landlady threw his dinner, plates and all, out of the window," but, as Henry James remarked, this was

related of so many of Landor's dinners and of so many windows that "he must often have fasted, apart from his bill for crockery."

The cause of his irritable moods appears in a letter he wrote to Forster at Christmas 1859:

> Bath has no resemblance on earth, and I never have been happy in any other place long together. If ever I see it again, however, it must be from underground or above. I am quite ready and willing to go, and would fain lie in Widcombe churchyard, as I promised one who is no more. It may cost forty pounds altogether. I cannot long survive the disgrace of my incapacity to prove the character of those who persecute me, and this you only can relieve me from. When I think of it, I feel the approach of madness.

In reply to this letter, Forster "found it absolutely necessary" to state decisively that "what he desired could not be done"; thereafter, though he wrote several times, his letters were unanswered.

Landor had good reason to feel aggrieved. Forster had placed him in a false position by persuading him to apologise to the Yescombes, and for two years since that date, had sought to account for his own failure to control him by supposing him senilely irresponsible for his actions. His neglect of the appeals from Fiesole, which he had interpreted as mere peevish plaints, must have seemed callous to Landor. Finally, in sharp contrast with his former enthusiastic energy in supervising Landor's publications, he now displayed a dilatory carelessness, which, after his refusal to help with *Dry Sticks*, Landor felt keenly. An enlarged edition of the *Hellenics*, with a number of new poems, and a dedication to Sir William Napier, had been mooted before he left England, and he expressed vexation at the delay of its publication in December 1858. Yet a year later, though the book had been printed and revised, he still had no news of its publication; Forster attributed the delay to the death of the publisher's brother, but Landor wrote angrily to Browning:

Mr. Forster could give a better reason—so can I. Much was I averse, as I told him, to his undertaking the revisal, when two learned friends had made the offer. He however persisted, and I suspected the consequence. It was intended that Napier should never be gratified by the dedication.

Sir William Napier survived just long enough to receive his old friend's compliment, for he died in February 1860 and the book was actually published when Landor wrote to Browning. But Landor's resentment against Forster was unabated, and in reply to an attempt by Browning to defend Forster, he wrote:

> I have never given Mr. F. the slightest cause of offence. Like another great man recorded in the Bible, "he hath waxed fat and prospered." Prosperity seems to have spoilt him . . . I never play at fast and loose. Let him play at it with others, never more with
>
> W. Landor.

"Pray never write to him on my account," he begged Browning in another letter; "I never shall."

Before his last appeal for Forster's help in revealing the true character of the Yescombes, he had attempted further action on his own account. At Fiesole he wrote a third pamphlet, *Mr. Landor's Remarks on a Suit Preferred Against Him at the Summer Assizes in Taunton, 1858*—his old contempt for courts of justice appears in his carelessness of whether his case had been tried at Taunton or Bristol. To secure its publication, he wrote to George Jacob Holyoake, the celebrated socialist agitator, who was a friend and champion of many of the Hungarian and Italian refugees whose interests Landor had befriended. He declared himself able to offer no more than five pounds for a hundred copies, but "curiosity, I am assured, will induce many to purchase it, my name being not quite unknown to the public." Holyoake knew that publication would involve both Landor and himself in another action for damages, but he admired Landor for "his force, simplicity, directness, and the wonderful compression of his style: for his singular fearlessness, determi-

nation of thought, and his Paganism." He was flattered that a writer of Landor's reputation should esteem him as one willing to take a risk in the interest of justice; "in applying to me, I supposed he had reason to believe that he could trust me in a matter where confidence might be of importance to him," and as Landor had made no stipulation that he should keep the commission secret, in a like generous spirit he undertook the printing without "any stipulation for indemnity." He had the manuscript copied at his own house, so that nobody at his office could identify the handwriting of the original, and his brother having set up the type and printed off the copies with his own hands, nobody else saw the pamphlet before copies were delivered by post to addresses directed by Landor. These included many of the principal newspapers, Milnes, Forster, Kossuth, Sir William Napier, Mrs. West of Ruthin Castle, the judge who tried the case, curiously Lord Brougham, and ironically "Mr. Hall of Highgate;" a number of copies went to Bath, some to Captain Brickman, others to Empson the antique dealer.

The Yescombes caused a reward of £200 to be offered for the discovery of the printer. But the secret was carefully kept till Holyoake confided it to Milnes a dozen years afterwards, and became common knowledge only when he published his memoirs in 1893. The surreptitious character of the publication, however, nullified the effect desired by Landor; the Yescombes could self-righteously indicate their proffered reward as evidence that they scornfully repudiated the pamphlet's accusations, and though Swinburne regarded its arguments as "trenchant and conclusive," most of Landor's friends could only wag their heads portentously while deploring his imprudence in choosing such a method of self-justification—like an unseen urchin peppering with a pea-shooter a majestic limb of the law. Landor felt that Forster, with influential connections such as Holyoake lacked, could have contrived the exposure of the Yescombes, and his refusal to make the attempt revealed him as a false friend.

With this worry haunting the back of his mind, he was irri-

tated by further friction with his family, who had omitted to send some of his books and pictures to furnish his lodgings. To Browning he wrote:

> I have less sleep, and consequently less appetite, than ever. I shall have been as much murdered as if I had been shot or poisoned. They who robbed an indulgent and helpless father are capable of either.

He voiced his indignation against his son Arnold in verses entitled *Ingratitude:*

> Can this be he whom in his infancy,
> Hour after hour, I carried in my arms,
> When neither nurse nor mother could appease
> The froward wailing? . . .
> O thou of largest, wisest, tenderest heart,
> Truly thou sayest that a serpent's tooth
> Wounds not so deeply as a thankless child.

Originally drafted at Siena the previous August, these verses were now amended and enclosed in a letter to Arthur Walker.

As a boy, Walker had been a playmate of Arnold Landor's when Landor first lived at Fiesole. After serving as an army officer in India and China, he returned to England to study medicine and renewed his acquaintance with Landor at Bath, receiving in February 1847 a presentation copy of his *Collected Works*. For some years he was a welcome visitor at Rivers Street, and when he volunteered as an army surgeon in the Crimean War, Landor corresponded with him. He remained a faithful friend, and after the break with Forster, Walker shared with Mrs. Lynn Linton and Holyoake the task of supervising Landor's publications in England.

Landor's first letter to the press since his leaving England, on "Garibaldi and the Italians," appeared in the *Times*, probably through Holyoake, on 29th November 1859. Another letter, on "The State of Italy," followed a month later, but in his moodiness on settling in at the Via Nunziatina, he informed

Browning that "politics have little interest for me now Garibaldi is no longer in arms, and Italy is parcelled out by Napoleon, Francis and the Holiness of our Lord." He was annoyed with the staircase at his lodgings, which he declared inferior to a mason's ladder and "down which, had I not clung to the rail, I should have fallen and have broken my back or neck." Then "we have had some such fogs in Florence as I never saw but once in London." Confined to his room with a cold, he was convinced that he must die soon, and wrote the verses beginning "The grave is open."

But in the new year, he began to settle more cheerfully in his new home. He was well enough to drink three glasses of Chianti on Rose Graves-Sawle's birthday (19th January), and felt "better than I was two years ago," though he could not alight from a carriage without help and hoped that he would not fulfil his Bath doctor's prophecy that he was "good for another ten years." He began to write English again, as well as Latin; as a result of reading Abelard's letter, he wrote an imaginary conversation between Abelard and Heloise, and during the three months following, four verse dialogues, *Sappho, Alcaeus, Anacreon, and Phaon, Theseus and Hippolyta, Homer and Laertes*, and *The Trial of Aeschylus*. He was reading Balzac, as well as novels by James, Trollope, and Harriet Beecher Stowe; he was greatly impressed by Schlegel's *Dramatic Art and Literature*, and though recalling his personal dislike of Schlegel, rated him and Southey as the only two critics of poetry "worth rubbing the ear and touching the brow for." Schlegel led him to reading "regularly through" all Shakespeare's dramatic works —though not his sonnets, as "I cannot feast on mince-pies and rich puff-paste"—and on being shown a notice of Milton, he was interested to find that "his children robbed him as mine have robbed me, but they had it not in their power, if in their will, to be so ungrateful."

Absorbed in work, he ceased to worry over not receiving his copies of the *Hellenics*, except lest "dear, good Napier" should die before he could see the dedication. Besides his work, he

found pleasure in a delightful circle of friends. Isa Blagden, the close friend of the Brownings, called on him regularly, and to visit her villa on the hills outside Florence he made in April his first excursion beyond the city gate since his coming to the Via Nunziatina. Through the Storys, his lodgings became a favourite haunt for American visitors, among them Senator Winthrop and the Boston publisher, James T. Fields, who not only delighted Landor by promising to get his "Defence" inserted in an American periodical, but proposed to publish a new volume of his poetry and an edition of his collected works. Fields was not a maker of empty promises, but the Civil War broke out soon after his return to America and his plans for publishing Landor had to be abandoned. His proposal, however, supplied an incentive to work, and by April Landor had accumulated enough unpublished verse for a volume of two hundred pages.

Walker's sister, the Contessa Baldelli, became, with her two little daughters, one of Landor's most welcome visitors, and remained till his death so devoted in her attentions that, two years later, he spoke of her as "my dear old friend the Countess Baldelli." But the brightest light in his life, the last successor of Rose Graves-Sawle and Mrs. Lynn Linton in a daughter's capacity, and the last to satisfy his craving for feminine beauty, was the lovely young American girl, Kate Field, who won the gallant devotion of the brothers, Tom and Anthony Trollope. Introduced to Landor, probably by Tom Trollope's wife, Theodosia, soon after his arrival in his Florence lodgings in December 1859, she fell a ready victim to his courtly charm, and two years after his death, made the most of her intimacy with him in a series of three magazine articles. As became a young woman of striking beauty, she had regard for her reputation, but there is little doubt of the identity of the "young American in whom he was interested," on whom he pressed the acceptance of his payment for an imaginary conversation, "declaring that he had no possible use for it." Kate Field was not well off, and for years, with lavish generosity, Landor had presumed on his age to offer such presents to the women who gave

him affectionate companionship—with disastrous results in the cases of Mrs. Yescombe and Miss Hooper. Though now a poor pensioner on his brother, he still sent useful presents to Mrs. Lynn Linton, and with touching consideration for her slender purse, reminded her, in June 1860, that her letters to him "must never be prepaid, for I am the richer of the two."

Kate Field's lodgings were within walking distance, and when he elected to teach her Latin, the lessons provided him with an excuse to call on her several times a week. He usually came with a bouquet—nosegay, he called it, disdaining the word bouquet, "which the French, who distort and abuse everything, have formed out of *boschette*"—of camelias or roses, growing in his own little garden, "in which he took great pride." He read Latin with a "majestic flow, and sounding, cataract-like falls and plunges of music." Like Mrs. Story, Kate Field was enthralled by his reminiscences: she "looked with wonder upon a person who remembered Napoleon Bonaparte as a slender young man." Few octogenarians retain the faculty of talking entertainingly, but Landor retained a talent for "ready wit and even readier repartee" to adorn "his great learning, varied information, extensive acquaintance with the world's celebrities." Kate Field endorsed Story's admiration for his marvellous memory, which failed him only occasionally in remembering names, when he would exclaim in annoyance, "God bless my soul, I forget everything!"

She relates similar stories of his tenderness for his Pomeranian dog, Giallo, as Mrs. Crosse and Mrs. Lynn Linton tell of Pomero. Giallo was a present from Story on Landor's coming to the Via Nunziatina, and became, yapping at the old man's heels, a sight almost as familiar in Florence as Pomero had been at Bath. He was taught habits similar to Pomero's, jumping into his master's lap and laying his head against his neck, being indulged after dinner in boisterous play. Landor had the same way of breaking off in conversation to address the dog; "no matter upon what subject conversation turned, Giallo's feelings were consulted." He would compose amusing epigrams in dog-

gerel "to please Giallo," and also commemorated their affection in the verses:

> Giallo! I shall not see thee dead,
> Nor raise a stone above thy head,
> For I shall go some years before,
> Where thou wilt leap at me no more.

His prophecy was verified; he did not have to suffer again the grief of losing Pomero, for Giallo was still a young dog when his master died, and survived another eight years in the care of Contessa Baldelli. Asked once if he thought dogs were admitted to heaven, Landor replied, "Why not? They have all the good and none of the bad qualities of man."

§ 4

At the end of June 1860 Landor accompanied the Brownings to Siena for the hot summer months. According to Kate Field and Mrs. Story, he appears to have been his old self of Bath days, charming and entertaining, "full of wit and sense and all sorts of noble things." Charmed by his company, a lady expressed the hope of meeting him again in the following season, and Landor replied, "Ah, by that time I shall have gone farther and fared worse!" When he was told that Pope Pius IX was likely to die, erysipelas having settled in his legs, he remarked, "He has been on his last legs for some time, but depend upon it they are legs that will last—the Devil is always good to his own, you know!" "How surprised St. Peter would be," he said another time, "to return to earth and find his apostolic successors living in such a grand house as the Vatican. Ah, they are jolly fishermen!" Mrs. Browning was "often convulsed with laughter at his scorching invective and his extraordinary quick ejaculations, perpetual God-bless-my-souls, &c." He retained all his old love of shocking, and must have been in good form against Louis Napoleon, of whom he wrote on 2nd July to

Holyoake: "This wretch, and his uncle, have been the two greatest scourges of Italy."

As fervent in his admiration of Garibaldi as violent in detestation of Louis Napoleon, he expressed the hope, in the same letter to Holyoake, that "Sicily may become independent, and that Garibaldi will condescend to be its king, under the protection of Italy and England." Sending in the previous February to the *Athenaeum* his verses on the death of Arndt, he had asked, "What would this patriot have thought of the proposal to annex Savoy, and even Nice, to France?" Now, in enthusiasm for any movement in the cause for liberty and having no money for a subscription to the fund raised for Garibaldi's Sicilian expedition, he gave Browning his watch to present to the fund. Only after some days was Browning able to persuade him to take back his timepiece, and he then busied himself in writing an imaginary conversation between *Savonarola and the Prior of San Marco,* an Italian version of which he had published at Florence in pamphlet form for the benefit of the wounded Tuscans. This effort in writing Italian, reminiscent of his *Poche Osservazioni* of nearly forty years before, "gave me some trouble to compose," and he received help in its revision from Arthur Walker, who came to stay with him during the summer. The English version he sent to Mrs. Lynn Linton, who secured its publication in the *London Review* of 22nd September, while two other dialogues, in which Garibaldi himself figured, were printed in the *Athenaeum.*

The printing of the Italian pamphlet cost "about twelve franasconi," and on his return to Florence in October, he asked Browning for twenty franasconi, as he owed "seven or eight" for gilding picture-frames. Besides this remittance, he wanted "only a dozen more for Christmas boxes—and none whatever for all the remainder of next year." As always, he was optimistic about the modesty of his requirements. He spent nothing on clothes—"it is my glory to be in rags," he said, "in order to help a little the necessitous and the deserving"—but he had no sooner given away all his pocket money to one charity than an-

other equally deserving prompted his asking for advances. He was also fastidious about comfort and efficient service in his lodgings, and during the winter, when the severe weather kept him much indoors, his letters to Browning at Rome contained querulous complaints. Having lost all his teeth, he asked Mrs. Romagnoli to dress a chicken or a lamb's head; when she declined, "pretending she was quite sure she would never please him," he decided that she had a grievance against him, and determined in disgust that, to prove "how little will content me," "a cup of milk and another of chocolate will be my whole maintenance for the remainder of my life." Later he protested that he had "never complained of Mrs. Romagnoli's cooking," and "we continue good friends." Soon he was unable to use his drawing-room because the chimney smoked so badly that it "affected my lungs no less than my eyes," and he feared "the landlord will not alter the stove or chimney." When Browning felt impelled to tell him that "strict economy is enjoined on us," that Mrs. Romagnoli had "very little latitude allowed her," and that "one must be content with one's restricted means," he exclaimed that "this *shocks* and overthrows me"—he had never doubted that his brother Henry "had offered to advance the very little I wanted," and begged Browning to inform his brother that "I am resolved to confine my expenses to £120 a year," being apparently unaware that he was already receiving much more than that sum.

He declared himself vexed with politics; the French successes exasperated him, he trembled for Garibaldi, and reasserting his published opinion that "nothing is so glorious as tyrannicide, nothing so base as assassination," exclaimed, "O Orsini, Orsini! how glorious, how beneficent to the world would thy achievement have been, if the guilty had fallen and the innocent had not." He grumbled at "severe and comfortless weather as there can have been in England," and when he had his photograph taken and Browning ordered a dozen for his use, he declared he had "not a dozen friends surviving on earth." He wrote on his eighty-sixth birthday to Rashleigh Duke, "Most

of the old friends are dead and gone," and remarked sadly to Kate Field, "I have lived too long."

Yet he was working again almost as regularly as in his Bath days. A verse dialogue between *Joan of Arc and Her Judge* was sent to Mrs. Lynn Linton in January, and the same month he asked Walker if he knew of an editor who would give "a few crowns" towards helping Garibaldi's wounded for an imaginary conversation between Virgil and Horace he was then writing. This was published in the *Athenaeum* of 9th March, and roused him to exclaim furiously that "printers are properly called Devils," since "*Virgil* and *Ovid* are made Englishmen," though "they called one another Virgilius and Ovidius." When he received two guineas for this contribution, he was so concerned about his financial affairs that he broke his rule never to profit by his pen and told Browning, "This will cover all my expenditure, beyond for board and lodging, these two years, excepting for picture frames."

Of old friends, few came to remind him of the past—Gibson the sculptor, Sandford, who called in the course of his travels, and Kirkup, who visited him regularly, "deafer than a post now," and tried "in vain to convert him to the spiritual doctrine," at which, reported Mrs. Browning, "Landor laughs so loud in reply that Kirkup hears him." His happiest recreation was his Latin lessons to beautiful Kate Field, and though he complained that Giallo "grows horribly fat, because I am unable to walk out with him," he always managed, even when his cough was bad, to walk the length of the street to her lodgings.

When Kate Field changed her lodgings in May 1861, it was a blow a little mitigated by regular visits from his two younger sons. "Good, grave Walter," though he showed himself the most dutiful when visiting his father in England, seems to have behaved little better than Arnold while Landor was at Fiesole, but he and Charles were both sufferers from the meanness of their elder brother and, counting on their father to see justice done to themselves, they became suddenly decently attentive

to him. When Landor signed over his estates to his eldest son, Arnold undertook to pay, on his mother's death, an annuity of £150 each to his brothers and sister, but "he now refuses to do it," Landor told Browning, "altho' I gave him everything, and could have disposed of nearly £40,000." Landor asked his brother Henry to write "a line of remonstrance to Arnold on his ingratitude and dishonesty," and begged Browning to obtain from Forster the letter from Arnold to himself, "by which his brothers may legally claim the £150 annuity."

Having negotiated the winter well, he would probably have been as entertaining as the previous year if he could have spent a third summer at Siena. But Mrs. Browning died on 29th June, within a week of the date on which she and her husband had gone to Siena a year before. Landor's note of condolence was characteristic.

> My dear Browning: Of all your friends who lament your irreparable loss, not one grieves more deeply than I do. I will not say more, I can say nothing more true. Let these few lines, if they can be but of small or no comfort to you, at least manifest the affection of your affectionate
>
> W. Landor.

In these matters his sense of delicacy never failed; his sincerity despised flowers of impertinent presumption. For three weeks he avoided intrusion on Browning's sorrow; before accompanying Kate Field to Isa Blagden's, where Browning was staying, he wrote a line of tentative warning lest Browning might think "a visit from an old friend unseasonable."

On 1st August 1861 Browning left Florence, and Landor never saw him again. The loss of this good friend was accentuated, within the month, by Kate Field's return to America. Since the Latin lessons ceased in May, he had driven out regularly in a hired carriage with Kate and her mother. Once they drove to Fiesole; when they came within sight of his villa, he "gave a sudden start," and "tears filled his eyes and coursed down his cheeks." As the horses were turned back to Florence,

he sighed, murmuring, "I have seen it probably for the last time," and finished the drive in silent dejection. On their last drive together, the girl tried vainly to cheer him. "I shall never see you again," he said, "I cannot live through another winter, nor do I desire to. Life to me is but a counterpart of Dead Sea fruit, and now that you are going away, there is one less link to the chain that binds me." When she called to say good-bye, Landor insisted on returning with her to her own door, and staggered down to the waiting carriage with a heavy album of engravings—once the property of Thomas Barker, the Bath landscape-painter, from whom Landor had purchased it to relieve him of debt—as a parting gift to make her "think of the foolish old creature occasionally."

With Kate Field gone, he had no incentive to muster energy for walking. "A walk of a hundred paces tires me out," he said, "so that I confine it to my room." As his landlord would not make the alteration, though "to him the advantage will be permanent—to me (God knows) it must be very temporary," he substituted for his bedroom windows a glass door, opening upon a terrace, on which he proposed to spend all his October days. Florence was full of visitors for an exhibition, but he declined Contessa Baldelli's invitation to accompany her there—"I abhor all crowds, and am not fascinated by the eye of kings. I never saw him of Italy when he was here before, and shall not now." He amused himself with the romances of James, but while he retained his high opinion of his old friend's work, he confessed "I doze twenty times in the day when I am reading, which I continue nine hours in the twenty-four."

As the winter came on, he became afflicted by sciatica; he could not go out, kept his room for three months, and found it painful even to bend over his writing-table. In November he wrote to Browning that his grave was being made at Widcombe in the place "fixt upon sixty years ago by a lady who loved me to her last hour." But this step was not inspired by any sense of his immediately impending end; the parson at Widcombe was retiring, and informed Landor that the grave must be made be-

fore the new incumbent came. His friend Sandford, who was living at Bath, paid the bill of ten pounds five shillings for digging and bricking the grave, and for four months Landor worried himself about the means of repaying the sum. He wrote to Browning, asking him to apply to Arnold for the money, but Browning, knowing the futility of appeal to that parsimonious ingrate, applied to Henry Landor. Henry refused, indignant at Arnold's shameless disregard of his responsibilities. Landor, greatly distressed, proposed to beg his friend Mrs. West to give him ten pounds—"this is humiliation, but what humiliation have I not undergone." Lest Browning should think it odd that he asked a gift from a lady, he declared, "I would not ask anyone to *lend* me what I might not be able, and my son Arnold would certainly not be willing, to repay," and he thought of Mrs. West because he had given to her his bust by Gibson and his daughter's by Bartolini, both articles of value. But he was spared this humiliation by a belated offer from his son Walter to pay the money.

From his son he was unwilling to accept a gift, as he was determined "never to receive anything from my family." Once Charles brought him a meat pie, which he refused to accept till he was assured that he could pay the woman who made it, and to reimburse Walter, he gave him "pictures which have cost me forty-odd pounds."

Walter and Charles, more or less dependent on their elder brother's meagre bounty, evidently intended to secure the few personal valuables remaining to their father, at the expense of dutiful attentions which could not be long protracted. Though Landor found "something funny in my making a will . . . all my disposable property not being worth twenty pounds—without the pictures," he was persuaded to make one. In English law, this will was illegal, since it was witnessed by Walter and Charles, the principal beneficiaries, but on Landor's death, his niece Sophy, who deputised for her uncle Henry as executor to the previous will, showed a vastly different sense of honour from her cousins' by scrupulously observing the wishes of both

wills. This will bequeathed three valuable pictures, including a Salvator and a Guido, to Browning, but he declared himself "more than rewarded for my poor pains by being of use for five years to the grand old ruin of a genius, such as I don't expect to see again," and the three pictures were handed over to Landor's brother Robert, who soon gave such charitable memories of the donor to Forster.

Perhaps these preparations for departure to the next world reacted on Landor's rebellious spirit to make him contemplate the future more optimistically; possibly he had no illusions about the belated display of duty by his younger sons. Writing to Browning, on Christmas Eve 1861, his hope that "I may live long enough to see you once more," he related characteristically:

> Latterly my son Walter fancied that he found me in worse health than usual. This is not the case. However, he sent Dr.—— to visit me and prescribe. He made me a second visit, and found me well. In fact I did not take his medicine. This perhaps accounts for it.

Apart from the crippling sciatica, which prevented his climbing into a carriage even with assistance, he wintered well, his cough being less troublesome than in the previous year. Kirkup, Mrs. Tom Trollope, and Contessa Baldelli were his regular visitors, and he continued to receive numerous American callers. James T. Fields had published a full account of his "Defence," and put him in correspondence with one or two American editors, to whom he sent copies of the scraps of prose and verse which Mrs. Lynn Linton and Arthur Walker received in England. He was still sending packages of manuscript to Fields for a collected edition, and Walker was commissioned to find an English publisher for the small volume of unpublished verse.

Walker settled on T. C. Newby, mainly a publisher of novels—he had published Anthony Trollope's first novel, and perhaps Landor had his name from Trollope, who was introduced to him by the Tom Trollopes during his visit to Flor-

ence in the winter of 1860. Newby took his time over the printing; in February 1862 Landor had received "only five long slips—perhaps enough for a sheet," and "only forty-eight pages" had reached him by the end of May. However, Walker was "diligent in their revisal," and Landor had hopes of being enabled soon to send Browning a copy of the volume, to be called *Sweepings from Under the Study Table.*

During the delay of the proofs, he occupied himself with his last words on politics. His American friendships inspired keen interest in the Civil War, and, as always, he favoured the cause of the under-dog, an attitude so shocking to Kate Field, a Northerner, that she regarded his letters as evidence of "how a mind once great was tottering ere it fell." He believed the "Southrons" to be "fighting for their acknowledged rights, as established by the laws of the United States," and "the North had no right to violate the Constitution," for "slavery was lawful, execrable as it is." Holding no brief for the "horrible" idea of slavery, he pointed out that it was better that "the blacks should be contented slaves than exasperated murderers or drunken vagabonds," such as many might become on being presented with unaccustomed liberty, and suggested an "accomodation," by which slaves should be free after ten years' service, none should be imported or sold or separated from wife or children, and adequate grants of land should be given to the liberated. Kate Field either ignored or was unaware that Landor's was the view of half Europe; he accurately sensed the narrow escape of war between England and America when, in February 1862, he warned her that "France and England will not permit their commerce with the Southern States to be interrupted much longer," citing the "great discontent in Manchester and Leeds" from unemployment, of which he probably heard from Holyoake.

His idea of an "accomodation" inspired him to write a pamphlet "of twenty or more pages," which he sent to Walker, saying:

My poetry will find but little favour with the public, but I am confident that this will be red eagerly. . . . If Mr. Newby is so occupied that he cannot bring it out within the week after he receives it, throw it [away], for, like fish and venison, it must not stay on the table to get cold.

Pamphlets were not in Newby's line, so Walker took it to William Pickering, who roused Landor to such indignation as had boiled against Taylor over thirty years before, by requiring payment for the printing on publication. "I am astounded at the impudence of such publishers," he wrote to Walker;

In England I always paid at the termination of the current year for any trifle I ordered to be printed. It does not become me to make bargains and stipulations with such people. Were I to live a century, instead of a few months, I would never write another line for publication.

But he promised that "the printing of the Letters shall be paid within six weeks after"; adding optimistically, "if only 100 are sold little will be left owing." It is doubtful if even a hundred copies of the pamphlet, entitled *Letters of a Canadian,* were sold; the title page lacked the attraction of Landor's name, and the few copies circulated, treated as journalism of purely ephemeral interest, vanished so utterly in the dustbins that not even the assiduity of such a collector as T. J. Wise succeeded in finding one.

Within a few weeks of this publication appeared the last of his polemics to the press—a letter on Italian affairs in the *Times* of 26th June 1862. His contempt for royalty inspired disappointment that Garibaldi, instead of establishing himself as head of a federal republic, had handed over the fruits of his successes to King Victor Emmanuel, and he sent to Walker a letter of satirical comment prompted by an imaginary visit to Rome, purporting to be written at Leghorn on the return journey to Florence. Walker sent it to the *Times* in good faith, as he had previously placed others of Landor's occasional writings, but

Browning was furiously annoyed when he saw it. Amazed at his anger, Landor explained that he had intended the letter to be anonymous, but Browning wrote to Isa Blagden that, since Landor admitted the letter to be a lie, he regarded the explanation as another, and "anything more disgraceful to him or to Walker I cannot easily fancy." His anger doubtless arose from the necessity of having to explain to Henry Landor how his brother, who was represented as living with strictest economy at Florence, came to be travelling as far afield as Rome. His dislike of Walker, to whom he referred derisively as "Hookey," may have been purely personal, but more likely derived from unreasonable jealousy because Landor entrusted his publishing negotiations to Walker rather than to himself. In the previous February Browning had offered to correct for press the proofs of the *Sweepings,* but Landor had replied, "I owe you much, but I must not be indebted to you for revising the proof sheets of the volume which is now under the press." He readily made use of admirers, who, like Julius Hare, Forster, and Walker, were lesser men than himself, but shrank from accepting similar service from any he regarded as his equal in genius; two years before he had exclaimed to Browning, "I am ready to dash my head against the wall on reading that you have taken the trouble to transcribe my poetry, while you could be writing much better yourself."

Browning could hardly have been a less satisfactory agent than Walker. Months passed, while Landor complainingly awaited proofs of the *Sweepings.* When they at last arrived, they presented such a maze of errors as to drive him frantic, and he complained how "Doctor Walker, who undertook to revise the proofs, left it to me, week after week, until I had a brain fever for four days and nights, and in my impatience I threw 732 letters and all my papers under the grate." This reminder of the vexation occasioned by the guardsman's carelessness with the manuscript of the first *Imaginary Conversations* also recalls the difficulties encountered by Julius Hare in preparing Landor's copy for the press. No doubt much of the de-

lay was due to Landor's sending additions and emendations, and as to the printer's errors, an army surgeon could hardly be expected to compete in classical scholarship with Julius Hare, and the poems included nearly seventy pages of Latin, which Landor, who had reverted to his zeal for Latin of forty years before, told Browning were "the best of them."

He had neither health nor mood to cope with proof-correcting. His sons Walter and Charles, who visited him daily, seem to have limited their conversation to discussion of his impending end; like Charles II, Landor might have apologised for taking an unconscionable time over dying. Having paid Walter in pictures for the ten pounds advanced for the digging of his grave, he proposed to sell the rest of his pictures to pay his avaricious sons for the transport of his dead body to England. He got as far as ordering an enormous case to contain the pictures, but then encountered difficulties with the shipping authorities, who required an expert valuation of the consignment. Eventually, by November 1862, he was persuaded by representations from Browning to resign his idea of being buried at Widcombe, and "to rest my bones at Florence."

This renunciation of his arrangement with Ianthe was calculated to inspire sad reflections, and his despondency deepened with increasingly failing health. His cough was so bad that he was sure "this will carry me off;" "it is high time for me to go too," he wrote to Rose Graves-Sawle on her birthday in January 1863, "nothing I wish more." Within a few days of writing this letter, he received, with greetings, for his eighty-eighth birthday from his niece Kitty, news of the death of Rose's mother, Mrs. Paynter, inspiring the reminiscence, "I first saw her, when she was only six years old, walking on the burrows at Swansea, led by her sister Rose Aylmer, ten years older."

In the following April he seems to have suffered another slight stroke, for on the 27th he wrote to his brother Henry:

> Being on my last legs, or rather on no legs at all, I think it right and proper to write to you, and to give you this very unimportant

intelligence. For three days and nights I have been insensible. This morning, as you perceive, I can write. It is for the last time I shall take up the pen.

The Honble Mr Twisleton came yesterday to visit me, and brought to me a letter from my friend Browning.

My sons Walter and Charles have visited me last two evenings. Mrs L. and her daughter have never come near me nor inquired for me. The Countess Baldelli has come to sit with me every evening, and has brought her three little children with her. She is the daughter of Admiral Walker my old friend.

Adieu, dear Henry, and believe me ever

Your affectionate brother Walter.

But on the same day he wrote at greater length to Browning, thanking him for introducing to him Edward Twisleton, a younger brother of Lord Saye and Sele and a pioneer of higher educational reform. Ten days later, he wrote again to Browning of the pleasure he derived from the visits of Twisleton, who "adds good sense to good humour and sound scholarship," and "has tolerated my half-deafness, and has nearly cured the other half." During his convalescence in May, Twisleton called "almost every evening," and inspired such liking in Landor that he wrote in the dedication of *Heroic Idyls:* "All my old friends are dead, let their place continue to be supplied by Edward Twisleton."

As soon as he was sufficiently recovered, he renewed preparations for impending death. He had promised to give Walker his writing desk—the desk in which Stephen Wheeler found much material for his *Letters and other Unpublished Writings of Walter Savage Landor*—and explaining that "in a little while I must take a long journey, and I shall not be able to take London in my way," he sent the desk on 15th May to Contessa Baldelli, asking her to keep it for her brother. Writing to Walker on the same day to apprise him of what he had done, he urged him to proceed with the printing of the *Sweepings*, now to be entitled *Hellenic Idyls*, for "finding myself extremely ill the whole of this week, I do not think it prudent to wait for the last proof-sheet." Soon afterwards he wrote again:

Above all things I am anxious that no copy of the book be sent to me. God grant me patience to recover from what I have suffered already. The sight of anything relating to this accursed book might drive me distracted for another four days of the delirium it caused.

By the end of May he had so far recovered that he was no longer totally deaf and "I can write a little, but not long together, nor perhaps very legibly." His son Walter called regularly to take him for drives in his carratella, and he visited Casa Guidi to see the white slab commemorating the residence of Mrs. Browning. The treachery of his memory, noted by Story and Kate Field, now intensified; though he had been in daily touch with him for weeks, he wrote of Twisleton to Browning as "our friend Thistlethwaite," who two months later became "Thistleton," and his carelessness of dates appears in his letter to Walker of 15th May, which he dated, perhaps in a burst of savage irony, 1st April. But the flame of his inexhaustible creative faculty still flickered, and during the next few months he regularly sent manuscripts to Twisleton and Browning. They were mostly verse, like *The Marriage of Helen and Menelaos* and the dialogues, *Endymion and Selene* and *Pythagoras and a Priest of Isis*, which Forster printed in his biography from manuscripts supplied by Twisleton, but in August he sent Browning "an article for the *Times*," which either Browning refused to forward or the *Times*, in august displeasure at the Leghorn hoax, omitted to print.

He fretted over the continued delay in publishing his *Hellenic Idyls*—"I entrusted them to a friend who I believed would have attended to the printing," he wrote in July; "it seems he was too occupied in things more important." He worked himself into such agitation that his son Walter, probably with no intention of carrying out a commission so expensive, sought to appease him by employing a Florentine printer to publish the book. In September, however, promising Browning the first bound copy, he announced that Newby was publishing the volume, finally entitled *Heroic Idyls*, during the following

month. Unluckily Walker ignored his direction that no copy should be sent to him, and Landor fell into a passion over the well-meaning printer's corrections of his spelling. Browning unkindly delighted in these proofs that Landor's confidence in Walker had been misplaced and of his "stupidity in getting into a passion of wonder over the perfection of the man," but he exaggerated in telling Isa Blagden that Walker and Landor were "at daggers-drawn." In anguish Landor complained to Walker of being made to write *endurated* for *indurated*, *spread* for *sprad*, and *Ptolemies* for *Ptolemais*, and declared, "God has preserved me from cutting my throat after this," but his letter ended in gentle reproach, "May you be happier than your affectionate W. L."

Aware that his sons would appropriate everything on his death, he busily gave away such of his personal belongings as he thought his friends would value. He was continually sending parcels of books to Browning, mostly for Browning's son, and he also sent books to Mrs. West. He sent some pictures to London to be sold, intending that Mrs. Lynn Linton should have the proceeds, but her husband churlishly refused to let her accept the money. Landor, however, found a way to evade this veto, for when he wrote at Christmas to console his "dear daughter" on the death of her stepson, he enclosed two banknotes, as "I happen to have more than I want." These notes must have come from the sale of pictures, for ordinarily he had to apply to Browning for the smallest expenditure, even for paying the carriage on a parcel.

During the autumn, he was well enough to enjoy the company of Walker, Sandford, and Mrs. West when they visited Florence, but in November his cough became so troublesome that he did not care "whether I was to live or die." In December he was rid of his bronchitis, but was "so tortured by rheumatism and sciatica" that for nearly the whole month "I have been so helpless as to be unable to get into my bed without the laborious help of two persons."

He was furiously annoyed on receiving "a most insolent

letter" from somebody who proposed to write his biography. He asked advice from Twisleton, who, pointing out that such a career and personality as his were bound to attract biographers, hinted that he might have thought himself fortunate when a man of letters so distinguished as Forster had proposed to undertake the task, and that it was a pity he had quarrelled with Forster. He thereupon assured Twisleton:

> Do not think I bear any malice towards Mr. Forster. I forget, and have long forgotten, what caused my correspondence to cease. Certainly I saw reason for it at the time, and he must also have seen it, otherwise he would have come to an explanation. Both quarrels and explanations are too troublesome for me. What is dropt I never stoop to pick up. Of all things difficult to bear is malice. . . . It gives an unwholesome warmth and exposes to ridicule the wearer.

On Twisleton's advice, he therefore wrote to Forster:

> Well do I know the friendship you had for me, and have grieved over its interruption. I would not now write but for the promise you once held out to me that you might consent to be my biographer.

Relating the proposal of the would-be biographer, he asked, "If you still retain a thought of becoming my biographer, I hope you will protect me from this injustice," and ended with a hinted reproach to show that he well remembered Forster's jettisoning of him in the Yescombe trouble:

> How often have I known you vindicate from unmerited aspersions honest literary men! Unhappily no friend has been found hitherto who takes any such interest in
>
> Walter Landor.

Forster was domineering and cantankerous, but he had a generous heart, which responded immediately to a conciliating gesture. Within three weeks Landor was enabled to write "in-

stantly on receiving your generous and manly letter," saying, "severe sciatica has deprived me both of locomotion and of sleep, but not of gratitude." His "pain at every moment" prevented his writing more than a note and his replying to a letter from Browning, which he asked Forster to acknowledge on his behalf. Browning took this opportunity of saddling on the busy Forster the responsibility of correspondence with the old exile, and to Forster Landor addressed during his few remaining months of life the bulletins about himself which Browning had for four years received.

Crippled with rheumatism and racked by cough, he was now a querulous invalid. His sons Walter and Charles visited him every evening to undress and put him to bed, and soon he insisted that both should sleep at his lodgings because he feared "their returning at night to the villa on account of brigands." In January he wrote to his brother Henry greetings for his birthday and to express his "hearty thanks for the continual acts of your kindness to me."

> I do not expect to live many days beyond my birthday, so that what I am now writing to you is probably for the last time. It will be a great comfort to me to hear that you suffer less than I do. Sciatica cramps me sadly. It is late and with difficulty that I creep out of my bed. Many friends, English and strangers, come to visit me, but I can receive few. My earing [*sic*] and sight are almost gone.

His old friend Kirkup called regularly till he heard that Landor did not enjoy his visits, saying, "we are both as deaf as posts, and it brings me the bronchitis to speak audibly." Kirkup then went only enough to show that he had taken no offence, and cut his visits short, but he finally stayed away altogether after meeting Landor in the street one day, wheeled in a chair by his son Charles, and when the son stopped to speak, the old man "hardly noticed" him.

This was one of Landor's "off" days. On such a one young Algernon Swinburne, armed with an introduction from Milnes

and full of eager admiration, called to see "the most ancient of the demi-gods." Since he read the *Iphigeneia* as a boy of twelve, Swinburne had cherished enthusiasm for Landor's *Hellenics*, and on being shown into his presence, he threw himself on his knees and begged for the old man's blessing. Embarrassed to see this odd-looking young man in what Wilde's Lady Bracknell called a "semi-recumbent posture," Landor showed such discomfort that Swinburne soon retreated "in a grievous state of disappointment and depression." Back at his hotel, however, he wrote a note explaining his conduct and expressing "my immense admiration and reverence in the plainest and sincerest way I could imagine." The result was an invitation to come again, and he found Landor this time "as alert, brilliant, and altogether delicious as I suppose others may have found him twenty years since." To Milnes he wrote:

> If both or either of us die to-morrow, at least to-day he has told me that my presence here has made him happy. . . . There is no man living from whom I should so much have prized any expression of acceptance or goodwill in return for my homage. . . . In answer to something Mr. Landor said to-day of his own age, I reminded him of his equals and precursors, Sophocles and Titian. He said he should not live up to the age of Sophocles, not see ninety. I do not see why he should not if he has people about him who care for him as he should be cared for. I should like to throw up all other things on earth and devote myself to playing valet to him for the rest of his days. I would black his boots if he were *chez moi.* He has given me the shock of adoration which one feels at thirteen towards great men.

It might be suggested that Browning's devotion was dutiful repayment for Landor's services to his early reputation, but Swinburne had received nothing and had nothing to hope for. A crippled wreck of his old vital self, Landor yet retained the irresistible charm which had won him so many friends; Swinburne enthusiastically dedicated to him his *Atalanta in Calydon*, and after Landor's death, added an elegy in Greek while retaining the dedicatory inscription, so that "though losing the pleas-

ure I may not lose the honour of inscribing in front of my work the highest of contemporary names."

Delighted with Swinburne's zeal for the cause of Italian freedom, Landor enlarged on poetry, politics, and even religion. Speaking of his own imminent end, he said that "he had no belief in the immortality of the soul nor opinion about it, but was sure of one thing, that whatever was to come was best—the right thing, or the thing that ought to come."

When Swinburne was taking his farewell, Landor took down a picture from the wall—an alleged Correggio, "a masterpiece that was intercepted on its way back to its Florentine home from the Louvre, whither it had been taken by Napoleon"—and presented it to him as a memorial of their acquaintance. Swinburne protested that he needed no such memorial, but Landor insisted, and when Swinburne still hesitated to accept the gift, he rose, and "turning purple with anger, shouted, 'By God, sir, you shall!' "

This must have been the last outburst of Landorian violence. For the iron constitution, with its recuperative powers enabling recovery from the bronchial buffetings of so many winters, was at last collapsing. Mrs. Romagnoli related how Landor rang for her at two in the morning on May Day, and asked for his room to be lighted and the windows thrown open. He then demanded pen, ink, paper, and the date. Having written a few lines of verse, he leaned back and said, "I shall never write again. Put out all the lights and draw the curtains."

Beyond a few scrawled notes to friends, he kept his word. Probably the last book he read was Forster's *Life of Sir John Eliot*—a present from the author. Almost blind, very deaf, and crippled with rheumatism, he was wheeled out by his sons, and put to bed by them like a baby. He sent his "love to noble Dickens"—once even wrote a note to him, enclosed with one to Forster. After three months of silence, unbroken even by a few scrawled words to Forster, Browning received a note dated 22nd August:

I am nearly blind and totally deaf. My son Charles undress[*sic*] me, and I do not give any trouble. I dine on soup. What can you think of the enclosed! I am unable to step from stair to another, nor have I for several months.

The "enclosed" was a statement of grievances against the owner of his lodgings, set out with the same terse detail as his letters to Baker Gabb about his Llanthony tenants fifty years before. Incapable of movement, sight, and hearing, he yet rebelled as violently as ever against injustice and oppression.

The last note of all was written to Forster on 9th September:

I lost my senses for five days and nights in consequence of a verdict obliging me to pay so vast a sum for exposing [the woman Yescombe]. I must leave off. My head is splitting. You will print what I sent you.

His son Arnold had at last agreed to pay the Yescombes their damages in full, and Mrs. Landor told Tom Trollope that, when he heard, Landor tried to stab himself. Eight days later, on 17th September 1864, he died. For three days he had refused to eat, so weakening himself that a bout of coughing stopped his heart. Defeat at the hands of the Yescombes was too much for him; the rebel who had never yielded to authority could not suffer surrender.

His sons Walter and Charles buried him in the English cemetery at Florence; they alone followed his coffin to a grave marked with a slab simply inscribed, according to his wish, with his name and the dates 1775–1864. So his plans went astray for the last time. Ianthe had chosen two resting places for him, but he lay neither at Widcombe nor under the mimosas she had planted at Fiesole. All his life it had been so; his early ambitions as a poet, his projected alliance with Dorothy Lyttelton, his grand plan for a model estate, his unlucky marriage, his paradise at Fiesole, his love for his children. Worst irony of all perhaps, one of the most far-sighted and lucid political thinkers of his

time was regarded with amusement as a harmless eccentric. Only as a writer of purest prose had his ambition succeeded. "A writer as great as Shakespeare, surely," wrote George Moore in *Confessions of a Young Man.* "The last heir of a noble family. All that follows Landor is decadent."

"I shall dine late," wrote Landor, "but the dining-room will be well lighted, the guests few and select." The world moves slowly towards enlightenment; fools—not merely illiterate, but those with the advantage of high places—ignore the light for fleeting shadows. But the disasters of ignorance must compel men to education, and Landor's dinner has not yet progressed beyond the *hors d'œuvres.*

Appendix I

LANDOR'S LIFE AT A GLANCE

Summary of Events

1775	30th January	Born at Warwick.
1779		School at Knowle.
1783		Goes to Rugby School.
1791	December	Removed from Rugby.
1792		At Ashbourne with Rev. William Langley.
	13th November	Matriculates at Trinity College, Oxford.
1793	January	Begins residence at Oxford.
1794	June	Rusticated from Oxford.
	Autumn	At Tenby with Nancy Jones.
1795	January–April	Lodging at Beaumont St., Portland Place, London.
		Correspondence with Dorothy Lyttelton.
	April	*Poems* published by Cadell and Davies.
	May	Joins Nancy Jones at Tenby.
1796	October	Meets Rose Aylmer at Swansea.
1797		Writing *Gebir* at Swansea.
1798		*Gebir* published.
1798–1801		Between London, Swansea, and Warwick.
1800		*Poems from the Arabic and Persian* and *Iambi* published.
1801	Summer	Lodging at Oxford.
1802		*Poetry by the Author of Gebir* published.
	August	Visits Paris.
1803–1807		Mainly at Bath.
1803	Spring	Meets Ianthe (Sophia Jane Swifte).
		New edition of *Gebir* published.
1805	Autumn (?)	Ianthe becomes his mistress.
	3rd November	Death of his father.
1806	Spring	*Simonidea* published.
1807	Summer	Visits the Lakes.
1808	April	Meets Southey at Bristol.
	Summer	Purchases Llanthony Abbey and sells his Rugeley estate.
	August	Goes to Spain as a volunteer.
	Autumn	*The Dun Cow* published.

	November	Returns from Spain.
1809	January	*Letters to Riquelme* published.
	Summer	With Ianthe at Bath.
1810		*Ode ad Gustavum Regem* published by Valpy.
	April	Defends freedom of the press.
	Autumn	Begins writing *Count Julian.*
1811	January	Meets Julia Thuillier at Bath.
	24th May	Marries Julia Thuillier.
	June	Goes to live in rooms adjoining Llanthony Abbey.
1812	January	Charles Betham arrives at Llanthony.
	February	*Commentary on the Memoirs of Fox* suppressed.
		Count Julian published.
	August	Application for magistracy refused.
	October	Canvasses against Tories at General Election.
	November	Baker Gabb becomes his attorney.
1813	Spring	Quarrels with Betham.
	Summer	Moves into new house at Llanthony.
	October	Leaves Llanthony for Swansea.
	December	*Letters of Calvus* published.
1814	31st March	Last letter to Gabb from Swansea.
	April	Sued for libel by the Bethams.
	27th May	Sails from Weymouth for Jersey.
	October	Arrives at Tours.
1815	April	Meets Francis Hare at Tours.
	Autumn	*Idyllia* published.
	2nd October	Robert Landor arrives at Tours.
	late October	Leaves Tours for Como.
	December	Suspected as a spy on the Princess of Wales.
1817	June	Southey's visit to Como.
1818	5th March	His eldest son Arnold born at Como.
	September	Ordered by the authorities to leave Como.
	October	At Albaro, near Genoa.
	November	Settles at Pisa.
1819	Spring	Leaves Pisa for Pistoia.
		Sponsalia Polyxenae published.
	Autumn	Returns to Pisa.
1820	6th March	His daughter Julia born at Pisa.
	Summer	*Idyllia Heroica* published at Pisa.
	4th December	Refuses to reveal "bedchamber secrets" of Queen Caroline.

1821	March	Publishes *Poche Osservazioni.*
	Summer	Leaves Pisa and settles at Palazzo Medici, Florence.
		Meets Charles Armitage Brown and G. F. Leckie.
	Autumn	Begins writing *Imaginary Conversations.*
1822	April	Manuscript of *Imaginary Conversations* sent to Longmans.
	August	Julius Hare undertakes publishing negotiations.
	13th November	His second son Walter born at Florence.
1823	April	John Taylor persuaded to publish *Imaginary Conversations.*
	July	Southey-Porson dialogue in *London Magazine.*
		Meets Leigh Hunt at Florence.
1824	April	First two volumes of *Imaginary Conversations* published.
		Friendship with Seymour Kirkup begins.
1825	March	Hazlitt visits Florence.
	6th March	Death of Dr. Parr.
	April	Quarrel with Taylor—publication of third volume of *Imaginary Conversations* suspended.
	5th August	His third son Charles born at Florence.
	Autumn	Jefferson Hogg's visit.
		Moves from Palazzo Medici to Villa Castiglione.
1826	January	Visits Rome with Francis Hare.
1827		Preparing volume of collected poems.
	June	Meets the Blessingtons and Count D'Orsay.
	August	Visits Naples with the Blessingtons.
1828	Spring	Colburn publishes third volume of *Imaginary Conversations.*
		Meets Joseph Ablett.
1829	Spring	Threatened expulsion from Florence.
	July	Duncan publishes fourth and fifth volumes of *Imaginary Conversations.*
	Autumn	Leaves Florence for Villa Gherardescha, Fiesole.
	8th October	Death of his mother.
		Ianthe visits Florence.
	December	Death of Walter Birch.

1830	August	Crabb Robinson at Florence.
1831		*Gebir, Count Julian, and Other Poems* published.
		Antoir's challenge to duel.
1832	May	Visits England.
	June	Visits Southey at Keswick and Wordsworth at Rydal.
	28th September	Visits Lamb at Edmonton.
	29th September	Visits Coleridge at Highgate.
		Sails to Rotterdam with Julius Hare.
	October	Meets Schlegel and Arndt at Bonn.
	30th November	Arrives back at Fiesole.
		Friendship with G. P. R. James begins.
1833	May	Emerson visits Fiesole.
	Summer	Monckton Milnes at Fiesole.
1834	April	N. P. Willis at Fiesole.
	23rd July	Death of Coleridge.
	Autumn	*Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare* published.
	29th December	Death of Charles Lamb.
1835	March	Mrs. Paynter at Fiesole.
	April	Leaves Fiesole and his family.
	Summer	At Lucca, writing *Pericles and Aspasia.*
	September	Returned to England.
	Christmas	With Ablett at Llanbedr.
1836	Feb.–March	At Clifton.
	March	*Pericles and Aspasia* published.
	May	First stays at Gore House—meets John Forster.
		Letters of a Conservative published.
	July–Oct.	At Heidelberg.
	21st August	First contribution to the *Examiner.*
	October	Settles at Penrose Cottage, Clifton, and begins *The Pentameron.*
		Terry Hogan published.
	December	*A Satire on Satirists* published.
1837	Spring	*The Pentameron and Pentalogia* published.
	Summer	Writing *High and Low Life in Italy* (published in Leigh Hunt's *Monthly Repository*, August 1837 to April 1838).
	October	Settles at 1 St. James's Square, Bath.
		Friendships with William Napier and Rose Paynter.

1838	May	At Gore House—meets Dickens.
	Oct.–Nov.	Writes *Andrea of Hungary* and *Giovanna of Naples* (published 1839).
1839	May	Meets Louis Napoleon at Gore House.
	June	At Warwick—attacks Brougham in the *Examiner*.
1840	January	At Gore House.
		Fra Rupert published.
	March	Friendship with Browning begins.
	June	At Warwick.
	October	At Llanbedr and Cheltenham.
1841	May	Visits Paris.
	June–Oct.	His son Walter in England.
1842	15th January	Francis Hare died at Palermo.
		Contributes to *Foreign Quarterly Review* and *Blackwood's Magazine*.
	June–Sept.	His son Arnold in England.
1843	21st March	Death of Southey.
		Begins preparation of *Collected Works*.
	May–Oct.	Walter and Julia in England.
	August	Again attacks Brougham in the *Examiner*.
1844	January	His dog Pomero given by his daughter.
	September	Returns to Bath from summer visits.
1845	June–Aug.	Visits Warwick, Cheltenham, and Colton.
	September	At Budleigh Salterton.
	22nd November	Verses to Browning in *Morning Chronicle*.
1846	18th February	Rose Paynter married Charles Graves-Sawle.
	June	*Collected Works* published.
	July–Aug.	Visits Warwick, Stowe, etc.
	September	Visits Andrew Crosse in Somerset—meets Kinglake.
	November	Moves from 35 to 36 St. James's Square.
	December	Illness.
		Friendship with Eliza Lynn begins.
1847		*Poemata et Inscriptiones* published.
	May–June	In London, and at Hurstmonceaux.
	August	Visits Cheltenham, Birlingham, and Warwick.
	December	*Hellenics* published.
1848	9th January	Death of Joseph Ablett.
	15th April	Important letter on Hungary and Poland in *Examiner*.

	May	*Imaginary Conversation of King Carlo-Alberto and the Duchess Belgioioso, on The Affairs and Prospects of Italy* published.
	July	At Warwick.
	August	In Cornwall.
		Italics published.
	Oct.–Dec.	Letters on foreign affairs in *Examiner.*
1849	4th June	Death of Lady Blessington.
		Epistola ad Romanos published.
	July	Rev. Charles Landor died.
	August	At Warwick.
	September	At Llanbedr.
	May–Nov.	Letters on foreign affairs in *Examiner.*
1850	Jan.–Feb.	Political letters in *Examiner.*
	June	Reply to *Quarterly Review* in *Examiner.*
	August	Carlyle at Rivers Street.
	Aug.–Nov.	Political letters in *Examiner.*
1851	Spring	*Popery: British and Foreign* published.
	June–Aug.	*Nicholas and Nesselrode* in *Examiner.*
	Summer	Visits London, Wimbledon, and Lymington.
	31st July	Ianthe died at Versailles.
	August	Letters on Italian affairs in *Examiner.*
	Sept.–Dec.	*Letters to Cardinal Wiseman* in *Examiner.*
	Dec.	*Tyrannicide* published.
1852	July	At Wimbledon and Hurstmonceaux.
	Aug.–Sept.	At Warwick, Knowle, Cheltenham, and Birlingham.
	23rd October	*The Coming Empire* in *Examiner.*
1853	August	Last visit to Warwick.
	September	*Imaginary Conversations of Greeks and Romans* published.
	November	*Last Fruit Off an Old Tree* published.
	17th December	*Abettors of Revolution* in *Examiner.*
1854	24th February	His sister Elizabeth died at Warwick.
		Letters of an American published.
	March–April	Letters on foreign affairs in *Examiner.*
1855		Copious letters on the Crimean War to the *Examiner* and *Atlas.*
	23rd January	Death of Julius Hare.
	June–July	Stays with Forster in London–visits Napier and Kossuth.
1856	Spring	*Antony and Octavius* published.
	March	His dog Pomero died.

	November	*Letter to Emerson* published.
	Nov.–Dec.	Illness.
1857	22nd May	Makes his will.
	30th May	Letter from Geraldine Hooper's father.
	early June	*Walter Savage Landor and the Honourable Mrs. Yescombe* published.
	late June	*Mr. Landor Threatened* published.
	September	Forster at Bath.
1858	Spring	*Dry Sticks* published.
	March	Suffers apoplectic stroke.
	May–June	Convalescent.
	12th July	Arrives at Forster's London lodgings.
	23rd July	At Boulogne.
	23rd August	Convicted of libel at Bristol Assizes.
1859	June	Leaves Fiesole for lodgings in Florence.
		Mr. Landor's Remarks printed by Holyoake.
	July–Nov.	At Siena.
	December	Established at 2671 Via Nunziatina, Florence.
		Ceases communication with Forster.
		New edition of *Hellenics* published.
1860	12th February	Death of Sir William Napier.
	June–Oct.	With the Brownings at Siena.
	September	*Savonarola* published at Florence (English version in *London Review*, 22nd September).
1861		Occasional contributions to the *Athenaeum*.
	29th June	Mrs. Browning's death.
	August	Browning and Kate Field leave Florence.
	November	His grave dug at Widcombe.
1862	May	*Letters of a Canadian* published.
	26th June	Last letter to the *Times*.
	16th August	*Milton and Marvel (II)* in *Athenaeum*.
1863	April	Another apoplectic stroke.
		Meets Edward Twisleton.
	Summer	Still writing poetry.
	Autumn	*Heroic Idyls* published.
	Winter	Crippled with rheumatism.
	December	Resumes correspondence with Forster.
1864	March	Swinburne's visit.
	1st May	Writes for the last time.
	17th September	Death at Florence.

Appendix II

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL LIST OF AUTHORITIES

Note: During the three years spent in preparing this biography, the writer has received from many correspondents copies of letters to and from Landor, as well as other useful information and suggestions. As stated in the introductory chapter, he is especially indebted to Miss Baker-Gabb, of Abergavenny, for the use of over fifty letters from Landor to her ancestor, together with other letters and documents relative to Landor's affairs at Llanthony; to Mr. Walter Noble Landor, of Rugeley, for transcripts of the correspondence between Landor and members of his family, as well as much miscellaneous information; and to Dr. M. F. Ashley-Montagu for generously placing at his disposal materials collected for a projected biography of Landor. Mr. J. Alex. Symington kindly supplied transcripts of much Landoriana formerly in the possession of T. J. Wise, including a manuscript draft of Landor's "Defence", written after the verdict in the Yescombe libel case and quoted in Chapter XIV.

Owing to his long life and his having been a major literary celebrity for forty years, Landor figures in a vast quantity of the memoirs and reminiscences of his juniors. The appended list makes no attempt to enumerate all the works consulted in the preparation of this biography; it includes only those authorities which are either directly quoted or referred to in the narrative, and which are here enumerated to obviate the disfigurement of frequent footnotes.

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Appendix III

LIST OF LANDOR'S PUBLICATIONS

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Moral Epistle, Respectfully Dedicated to Earl Stanhope, 1795.
Gebir, 1798; 2nd edition, 1803.
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Simonidea, 1806.
Latin Idyls and Alcaics (?1807).
The Dun Cow, 1808.
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Three Letters, Written in Spain, to Don Francisco Riquelme, 1809.
Ode ad Gustavum Regem, 1810.
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Address to the Freeholders of Monmouthshire, 1812.
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The Pentameron and Pentalogia, 1837.
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Epistola ad Romanos, 1849.
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Two Poems, 1850 (attacking J. G. Lockhart, editor of the *Quarterly Review*).
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Tyrannicide, 1851.
Imaginary Conversations of Greeks and Romans, 1853.
Two Poems, 1852.
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Antony and Octavius. Scenes for the Study, 1856.
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Mr. Landor's Remarks on a Suit preferred against him, 1859.
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Note: Landor's works were first collected posthumously by John Forster in *The Works and Life of Walter Savage Landor*, 8 vols., 1876. In this edition Forster omitted several imaginary conversations previously published in periodicals, and deliberately excluded much verse published in *Last Fruit*, *Dry Sticks*, and *Heroic Idyls*. An edition in ten volumes by Charles G. Crump, 1891–93, closely followed Forster, though including useful notes and textual emendations; the two volumes of poetry were frankly a selection. In 1927 Chapman and Hall, the publishers of Forster's edition, commenced the issue of a handsomely printed edition of *The Complete Works of Walter Savage Landor*. They might have been more fortunate in the choice of an editor, for the late T. Earle Welby, though scrupulous in providing passages appearing in the original editions of the *Imaginary Conversations* but cancelled, at Forster's suggestion, in the 1846 edition, apparently lacked a sufficient knowledge of Landor's life and times to supply fully informative footnotes worthy of such an ambitious undertaking. Between 1927 and 1931, twelve volumes of the prose works were issued under Welby's editorship; *High and Low Life in Italy* was reprinted

for the first time since its serial publication in Leigh Hunt's *Monthly Repository*, but the single volume of "Miscellaneous Papers" made small pretence even to a judicious selection of Landor's many letters to the press, notably omitted the *Commentary* on Fox, and nullified the edition's aspirations to completeness. After Welby's death, the publishers completed the publication with four volumes of the *Poems*, magnificently edited by Stephen Wheeler, whose labours were also issued in a three-volume edition by the Oxford University Press.

INDEX

Abelard, 445
Abinger, James Scarlett, 1st Lord, 207, 328, 343
Ablett, Joseph, 242, 244, 246-247, 251, 256, 257, 258, 265, 276, 300, 314-315, 319, 352, 363, 371, 406, 407, 440, 471, 472, 473
Ablett, Mrs., 242, 406
Ackelon, Colonel, 242, 243
Acon and Rhodope, 387
Adair, Mr., 166, 167
Adair, Sir Robert, 55, 56, 72, 76, 131, 198
Addison, Joseph, 60, 200
Adventures of a Younger Son, 194, 266
Aeschylus, 288, 344
Agamemnon and Iphigeneia, 337, 465
Age of Reason, The, 136
Aikin, Arthur, 76
Ainsworth, Harrison, 240-241, 301, 476
Albany, Countess of, 42, 43, 79
Alcibiades the Young Man, 298
Alfieri, 42-43, 74, 79, 114
Alfieri and Metastasio, 413
Ali, Mehemet, 340
All the Year Round, xx, 478
Allingham, William, 394-395, 476
Alvanley, Lord, 343
Amymone, 401
Ancaster, Duchess of, 57
Andrea of Hungary, 299, 335-336, 356, 473, 481
Angel in the House, The, 394
Angelico, Fra, 219
Annual Review, 76, 77
Anti-Jacobin Review, 65
Antoir, M., 255, 280, 472
Antony and Octavius, 412-413, 474, 482
Appendix to Trotter's Memoirs of Fox, vide *Commentary on Memoirs of Fox*
Apperley, Charles ("Nimrod"), 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 476
Arden, Humphrey, 2
Aristotle, 275
Arndt, Ernst Moritz, 264, 449, 472
Arnolds, the, of Llanthony, 125
Ashley-Montagu, Dr. M. F., xix, 476, 478
Atalanta in Calydon, 465
Athenaeum, The, 40, 330, 414, 449, 451, 475, 478
Atlas, The, 392-393, 412, 474
Attila, 266, 322
Auckland, Lord, 343
Audiences by the Emperor of China, 302
Austen, Jane, 31, 46
Aylmer, 5th Lord, 44, 45, 276
Aylmer, Hon. Rose, 44-46, 69, 77, 87, 261, 276, 319, 459, 469
Azeglio, Marchese d', 411

"Babbo," 224, 230, 397, 433
Bacon, 22
Bagnesi, St. Maria, 205
Bagot, 2nd Lord, 257
Baillie, Joanna, 181
Baker, Sir Richard, 10
Baker-Gabb, Miss, xix, 476
Baker-Gabb, Richard, 479
Baldelli, Gertrude, Contessa, 446, 448, 453, 455, 460
Baldwin, Earl, of Bewdley, 206
Balzac, 445
Barker, Thomas, 453
Barrett, Elizabeth, *vide* Browning
Barrow, Isaac, 210
Bartolini, Lorenzo, 454
Bartolommeo, Fra, 220
Bath Herald, 102, 159
Beaconsfield, Earl of, *vide* Disraeli
Beauclerk, Lord Charles, 361
Beaufort, 6th Duke of, 139-140, 216, 338, 404, 423
Bedford, Grosvenor, 64, 95
Bekker, Immanuel, 183
Bell, Robert, 392
Bells and Pomegranates, 369
Belmore, Lady (*née* Caldwell), 79-80, 234, 319, 321, 352
Bentley, Richard, 240, 301, 336
Benwell, Dr., 22, 35
Bernadotte, 105, 184
Berthier, Marshal, 72

Betham, Charles, 129-131, 145, 147-150, 159, 160, 161-167, 211, 470
Betham, Ernest, 148, 164, 476
Betham, Frederick, 148-150, 160, 161, 162, 164, 165, 278, 423
Betham, Matilda, 129, 130, 165
Betham, Rev. William, 131
Bezzi, Aubrey, 221, 314, 361
Bible, the, 47, 218, 442
Birch, Rev. Walter, xix, 9, 13, 14, 15, 23, 24, 27, 28, 31, 59, 65, 67, 71, 72, 84, 87, 88, 120, 122, 125, 151, 181, 183, 186, 190, 191, 200, 204, 206, 222, 225, 471, 479
Bird, Molly, 39
Blackwood's Magazine, 107, 296, 297, 298, 334, 379, 411-412, 473, 476
Blagden, Isa, 430, 446, 452, 458, 462
Blake, Admiral, 342
Blake, General, 101
Blake, William, 194
Bleak House, xi-xxi, 253, 255
Blessington, Marguerite, Countess of, xvii, 40, 44, 79, 80, 191, 232-239, 242, 256, 258, 260, 263, 266, 270, 272, 273-275, 282, 283, 287, 289-291, 294, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 305, 306, 310, 311, 314, 315, 316, 317, 319, 321, 322, 323, 328-330, 333, 334, 336, 337, 339, 342, 344, 345, 346, 353, 360, 362, 366, 372, 374, 379, 380, 383, 385, 406-407, 408, 471, 474, 476
Blessington, Earl of, 80, 233-239, 242, 244, 263, 281, 283, 374, 471
Bloxam, T. L., 11, 12, 13, 476
Bolingbroke, Lady, 257
Bolivar, Simon, 380
Bonaparte, *vide* Napoleon
Book of Beauty, Heath's, 300, 317, 321, 323
Borghese, Prince, 211, 217, 244
Borghese, Princess (Pauline Buonaparte), 75, 211, 349-350
Borgia, Lucrezia, 196
Borromeo, St. Charles, 389
Boswell, James, 49, 52
Bowles, Caroline (Southey's 2nd wife), 98, 210, 326, 327, 328
Bowles, W. L., 98
Boxall, Sir William, 348-349
Boyle, Mary Louisa, xix, 266, 339, 379, 404, 477
Boythorn, Dickens's caricature of Landor as, xi-xxi, 7, 19, 148, 253, 254, 269, 365, 367, 385, 404
Brabant, Dr., 400-401
Bracebridge, C. H., 347-348
Bradbury and Evans, 412
Brickman, Captain, 418, 426, 432, 443
Bride of Abydos, The, 83
Bride of Lammermoor, The, 260
British and Foreign Review, 334
Brooke, Lord, *vide* Warwick
Brookfield, Mrs. W. H., xix, 316-317, 319, 477
Brookfield, Rev. W. H., 316
Brougham, Lord, 105, 140, 187, 207, 340-341, 343, 344, 443, 473
Brown, Charles Armitage, 194-196, 201, 214, 225, 227, 252, 265, 266, 268, 271, 276, 285-286, 307, 309, 314, 319, 322, 363, 370, 373, 374, 471, 477
Browning, Elizabeth Barrett, 74, 77, 267, 293-294, 370, 381, 436-440, 446, 448, 451, 452, 461, 475, 477
Browning, Robert, xix, 33, 65, 76, 98, 109, 194, 267, 293, 294, 301, 325, 335, 336-338, 344, 369-370, 374, 381, 382, 387, 394, 425, 430-431, 436-442, 444-446, 449-456, 458, 459, 460-462, 464, 465, 466, 473, 475, 477
Browning, To Robert, 369, 473, 481
Bulwer Lytton, Edward, Lord Lytton, 271-272, 301, 322, 332, 334, 379, 396, 477
Bulwer, Rosina, Lady, 271, 316-317, 321-323, 403, 477
Buonaparte, Joseph, 99, 100
Buonaparte, Napoleon, *vide* Napoleon
Buonaparte, Pauline, *vide* Borghese
Burdett, Sir Francis, 105, 136, 343, 481
Burghersh, Lord (11th Earl of Westmorland), xvii, 190, 206, 217, 238-239, 251, 265, 404
Burke, Edmund, 51, 55, 74, 204
Burke and Grenville, 198, 204
Burnet and Hardcastle, 197
Burrow, Rev. James, 169, 243, 248
Butler, Samuel, 9
Butler, Samuel, Bishop of Lichfield, 9, 11, 13, 14, 24
Byron, Lord, xx, 23, 43, 48, 67, 83, 88, 96, 108, 109, 181, 196-198, 211, 234, 236, 248, 262, 291, 295, 324, 333, 349, 478

Cadell and Davies, 30, 469
Caldwell, Bess, 79, 319, 408
Calvus, 107, 156-158, 339, 470, 481
Campbell, Thomas, 181, 292
Canaldoli, Count di, 238
Canning, George, 108, 132, 134, 140, 206, 235, 338
Canova, 183
Canterbury, Lord and Lady, 343
Capern, Edward, 413

Caravan, 333
Carbery, Lady, 19
Carlyle, Thomas, 272, 338, 395-396, 413, 474, 477
Carnot, 170, 171
Caroline, Queen, 70, 175-176, 181, 185-188, 470
Cary, Henry Francis, 9, 23
Castiglione, Villa, 216, 223, 224, 235, 246, 281, 471
Castlereagh, Lord, 108, 157
Catullus, 196, 357, 379, 428
Caxtons, The, 271
Chamberlain, Neville, 206, 388
Channell, Baron, 429, 443
Chantrey, Sir Francis, 243
Chapman and Hall, 411, 412, 482
Charitable Dowager, The, 155
Charles IV, of Spain, 99
Charlotte, Princess, 65, 181
Chateaubriand, 349
Chatham, William Pitt, Earl of, 134
Chesterton, G. K., 369, 477
Cheveley, 321
Chimes, The, 325
Chorley, H. F., 330-331, 477
Christ, 117
Christie's, 305
Cicero, 210, 275
Cimabue, 220
Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare, The, 272-275, 288, 289, 332, 472, 481
Clarissa Harlowe, 260
Clark, Rev. George Somers, 23, 25
Clarke, Miss (Madame Mohl), 349
Claude, 348
Clifford, Arthur, 172, 186
Clifford, Henry, 138, 172
Clifton, General Sir Arthur, 9
Clifton, Landor at, 84-85, 105, 310, 316-319, 334, 472
Cobbett, William, 105, 134
Colburn, Henry, 33, 156, 157, 240, 241, 273, 288, 301, 330, 471
Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, 20, 26, 55, 56, 64, 93, 97, 99, 118, 129, 197, 227, 262, 263, 289, 291, 292, 327, 385, 472
Coleridge, Mrs. S. T., 97, 118
Collected Works, Landor's, 379, 380-382, 411, 444, 473, 482
Collingwood, Lord, 264
Collingwood, Mrs., 285
Colloquies on Society, 198
Colonel Walker, Hallaji, etc., 300
Colvin, Sir Sidney, xviii, 3, 6, 36, 77, 109, 116, 287, 289, 303-304, 477
Commentary on Memoirs of Fox, 132-135, 138, 470, 481, 483
Confalonieri, Count, 389
Confessions of a Young Man, 468
Congreve, 39, 326, 382
Consalvi, Cardinal, 183
Conservative Epistles on the Church, 302
Conspiracy of Gowrie, The, 62, 64
Constable, Archibald, 215
Conversations of Lord Byron, 234
Conyngham, Lady, 2
Copyright, 340
Corneille, 109
Cornelia and Caius Gracchus, 215
Correggio, 220, 221, 347, 466
Corsini, Prince, 245
Cottle, Joseph, 64
Count Arezzi, 335, 356
Count Julian, 109-115, 119, 231, 288, 293, 335, 357, 470, 481
Courier, The, 55, 70, 78, 106, 136, 156, 158, 187
Cousin, Victor, 349
Cowley, Abraham, 11
Cowper, 98
Coxe, William, 178
Crabbe, George, 181
Crimean War, 340, 392-393, 412, 474
Critical Review, 60, 64
Croker, John Wilson, 108
Cromwell, Oliver, 381
Cromwell and Sir Oliver Cromwell, 379
Cromwell and Noble, 204-205
Crosse, Andrew, 370, 396, 416, 473
Crosse, Mrs. Andrew, 396-397, 413, 416, 447, 477, 478
Crump, C. G., 482
Crysaor, 77
Cuesta, General, 101
Cumming, Lady, 175, 186
Curiosities of Literature, 68, 331
Curse of Kehama, The, 96, 98, 322
Czartoryski, Princess, 349

Daladier, M., 388
Dalhousie, Marquis of, 320
Dallas, Mr. Justice, 161
Dalrymple, Sir Hew, 101, 102
Dance, George, 242
Dante, 23, 24, 221, 295, 344, 429
Dante and Beatrice, 380
Darling, Grace, 336
D'Arville, Miss, 285

Dashwood, Amelia, 225, 242, 246, 257, 271, 282, 286, 300, 304, 308, 314
Dauncey, Mr., 161
David, St., 124
David Copperfield, xviii, 84, 325
Davies, Rev. J. W., 137, 138, 142, 160, 161
Davy, Sir Humphry, 64
Dawkins, Edward James, 190-191
Death of Clytemnestra, 300
Defence, Landor's (against the Yescombes), 417, 419, 426, 446, 455, 476
Defoe, 393
Delille, Abbé Jacques, 37, 57
Delille and Landor, 199, 200
Demosthenes, 140
De Quincey, Thomas, 17, 19, 23, 43, 48, 49, 63, 93, 102, 110, 111, 176-178, 179, 191, 203, 262, 275, 289, 294, 384-386, 403, 477
Dickens, Charles, xvi-xviii, xx, 7, 19, 84, 148, 229, 253, 279, 280, 292, 299, 301, 302, 303, 324-326, 329, 334, 338, 347, 348, 353, 369, 374, 385-386, 401, 406, 407, 411, 423, 425, 427-428, 431, 466, 473, 477, 478; John Forster's *Life* of, 302
Dickens, Walter Savage Landor, 325, 407
Dilke, Charles Wentworth, 194, 195
Dillon, 13th Viscount, 214, 225-227, 231, 232, 265
Diogenes and Plato, 333
Disraeli, Benjamin, Earl of Beaconsfield, 2, 68, 331, 334
D'Israeli, Isaac, 68, 331, 333
Doctor, The, 356
Dogs, Landor and, xvii, 7, 269, 330, 375-377, 413-414, 447-448
Don Juan, 197
D'Orsay, Count Alfred, xvii, 234, 235, 238, 239, 242, 263, 316, 346, 385, 408, 439, 471
D'Orsay, Lady Harriet, 238-239
Dovaston, J. F. M., 78
Dowden, Edward, 97, 477, 479
Drayton, 10
Drummond, Sir William, 229, 230, 234
Dry Leaves, 425
Dry Sticks, 29, 35, 65, 114, 141, 320, 425-426, 429, 441, 475, 482
Dryden, 39, 109, 288, 325, 326
Dudley, Earl of, 229, 335
Duke, Ellen (*née* Landor), 353, 372
Duke, Ellen Landor, 354
Duke, Rev. R. E. H., 354
Duke, Rev. Rashleigh, 372, 409, 410, 450
Dun Cow, The, 107, 469, 481
Duncan, James, 242, 471
Durham, 1st Earl of, 340
Dying Speech of an Old Philosopher, The, 26, 299

Earl of Brecon, The, 355
Eastlake, Sir Charles, 348
Eaton, Daniel Isaac, 132, 136
Ebers, John, 241
Edinburgh Review, 105, 209, 331, 341
Eikon Basilike, 296
Eldon, 1st Earl of, 139, 423
Eldon and Elcombe, 300, 302
Eliot, Life of Sir John, 466
Ellenborough, 1st Lord, 136
Ellis, George, 132
Elmsley, Rev. Peter, 49
Elton, Sir Charles, 300, 316-317, 334, 408
Elton, Jane Octavia, *vide* Brookfield
Elton, Mary, 317, 319
Elton, Dr. Oliver, 387
Elwin, Rev. Whitwell, 37, 54
Emerson, Ralph Waldo, 266-267, 272, 414, 472, 475, 477, 482
Empson, Charles, 400, 443
English Bards and Scotch Reviewers, 109
English Misrule and Irish Misdeeds, 394
English Traits, 267, 414
Eothen, 370
Epicurus, 333
Epistle to a Barrister, 164
Epistola ad Romanos, 482
Erasmus, 135
Erewhon, 9
Erskine, Admiral J. E., 434
Erskine, Thomas, Lord, 349
Esmond, 334
Eugene Aram, 271
Eugénie, Empress, 345
Examiner, the, xix, 136, 221, 300-302, 315, 325, 327, 340, 341, 344, 345, 379, 386, 387, 390-392, 400, 401, 404, 411, 412, 472, 473, 474
Excursion, The, 181, 297

Faith's Fraud, 355
Fawn of Sertorius, The, 71, 107, 356, 357
Fellowes, Rev. Robert, 58-59, 132, 133
Ferdinand II, of Sicily (Bomba), 389
Ferdinand VII, of Spain, 99, 103
Ferranti and Giulio, 114, 115
Ferryman, The, 355, 357
ffrench, Rose, Baroness, 108
Fidelio, 346

Field, Kate, 73, 446-448, 451-453, 456, 461, 475, 478, 480
Field, Rev. William, 52, 479
Fielding, Henry, 22, 295
Fields, James T., 446, 455
Fisher, William, 321, 349
Fitzgerald, Mr., 99
FitzGerald, Edward, 396, 477
Flaxman, John, 259
Florence, Grand Duke of, 217, 245, 251
Florentine, English Visitor, and Landor, 138, 191, 215, 217, 245, 338
Fonblanque, Albany, 300-301, 477
Foreign Quarterly Review, 357, 379, 473
Forster, John, xvi-xx, 2, 4, 5, 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 24, 27, 28, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 48, 54, 63, 67, 70, 71, 89, 90, 92, 98, 106, 109, 116, 120, 126, 163, 164, 168, 176, 194, 205, 215, 219, 220, 227, 229, 253, 254, 268, 281, 285, 289, 290, 291, 296, 298, 299, 301-303, 306, 311, 313, 318, 322, 324-326, 328, 330, 332, 333, 334, 335-337, 338, 344, 357, 365, 366, 367, 369, 372, 374, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 392, 402, 405, 406, 408, 409, 411, 412, 413, 414, 416, 420, 421, 423-426, 427-428, 430, 432, 434, 436, 438, 439, 441-443, 444, 452, 455, 458, 461, 463-464, 466-467, 472, 474, 475, 477, 482
Forster, Landor's first meeting with, 301-303
Fortnightly Review, xix, 479
Fountain of Arethusa, The, 357
Fox, Caroline, 368, 477
Fox, Charles James, 51, 55, 72, 74, 76, 107, 131, 132, 133, 178, 319, 338
Fox, Lady Mary, 300
Fra Rupert, 333, 336, 344, 357, 379, 473, 481
Francis Joseph, Emperor, 445
Fraser's Magazine, 255, 380, 413, 478
Fray, Miss, 399-400
Frere, John Hookham, 102, 478
Fricker, Edith and Sarah, 97
Friendly Contributions, 300

Gabb, Baker, xvii, 126, 142-143, 145, 146, 147, 148, 150, 153, 154, 155, 158, 159-161, 164, 166, 173, 275, 467, 470, 476
Gabb, Baker, Senior, 142, 164
Gabell, Charles, 105, 126-127, 128, 129, 136, 137, 138, 141, 142, 143, 144, 146, 159, 164, 173, 231, 249, 311
Galsworthy, John, 7, 333-334
Garcia, Pauline, 346
Garibaldi, 288, 444-445, 449, 450, 451, 457
Garrick, David, 57, 110
Garrow, Joseph, 370
Garrow, Theodosia (Mrs. Tom Trollope), 319, 370-371, 446, 455
Gaspar, 348
Gaspey, Thomas, 39
Gebir, 38, 46-49, 54, 56, 59, 60, 62, 63-64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 76, 77, 88, 96, 98, 104, 106, 113, 185, 197, 228, 231, 261, 297, 331, 369, 384-385, 469, 481
Gebir, Count Julian, and Other Poems, vide *Poems* of 1831
Gebirus, 77, 78, 106, 386, 481
Gell, Sir William, 79, 229-230, 234
Gentleman's Magazine, 384
George III, 17, 61, 197
George IV, 67, 81, 91, 175, 185
Gherardescha, Villa, 246, 247, 255, 471
Ghirlandaio, 219
Giallo, 269, 447-448, 451
Giaour, The, 333
Gibson, John, 242, 244, 246, 451, 454
Gifford, William, 132-134, 208
Giotto, 221
Giovanna of Naples, 299, 335-336, 473, 481
Gladstone, W. E., 388, 392, 412
Goethe, 254, 370, 385
Goldsmith, 394
Gore House, 59, 232, 291, 301, 310, 319, 323, 325, 329-332, 334, 342-344, 346, 348, 350, 351, 358, 368, 380, 385, 406, 407, 472, 473
Gough, Charles, 142
Gozzoli, Benozzo, 219
Graves-Sawle, Sir Charles, 371, 377, 473
Graves-Sawle, Sir Joseph, 375, 377
Graves-Sawle, Rose, Lady, xix, 45, 276, 318, 319, 320, 321, 323-324, 325, 339, 340-341, 342, 343, 348, 350, 352, 354, 358, 359, 361, 362, 363, 364, 371, 373, 375, 376, 377, 387, 400, 406, 417, 424, 425, 428, 439, 445, 446, 459, 472, 473, 478
Greatheed, Bertie, 61, 106
Greenough, Horatio, 266, 267
Grenville and Burke, vide *Burke and Grenville*
Greville Memoirs, 331
Grey, 2nd Earl, 269
Grisi, Giulia, 346
Gronow, Captain R. H., 192, 193, 478
Guiccioli, Countess, 349
Guiche, Duchesse de, 238
Guido Reni, 455

Guilford, 5th Earl of, 225, 232, 236, 241, 341
Gulliver's Travels, 80
Gunlaug and Helga, 85, 87, 88
Gustavum Regem, Ad, 105, 470, 481
Gustavus IV, 105
Guy's Porridge Pot, 71, 106-107, 356

Hall, Captain Basil, 271
Hall, Samuel Carter, 299, 328-330, 345, 376, 391, 400, 431, 443, 478
Hall, Mrs. S. C., 328, 329
Hallam, Arthur, 335
Hallam, Henry, 238, 334-335, 382
Hamadryad, The, 387
Hamilton, Duchess of, 231
Hamilton, W. R., 238
Hapsburgs, the, 390
Harcourt, 2nd Earl, 22, 23
Hardy, Thomas, 25
Hare, Augustus J. C., 179, 316, 399-400, 402-403, 414-415, 431, 478
Hare, Augustus W., 225, 244, 265, 373
Hare, Francis George, 172, 192-194, 195, 201, 202, 221, 225, 228-229, 231-232, 234, 240, 242, 244, 245, 246, 251, 252, 255, 265, 267, 268, 271, 276, 282, 286, 306, 314, 324, 335, 361, 373, 374, 389, 399, 470, 471, 473
Hare, Julius Charles, Archdeacon, 202-205, 207, 209, 211-213, 215-216, 240-242, 245, 254, 256, 257, 264-265, 268, 274, 289, 296, 368, 373-374, 380, 384, 407, 408, 409-410, 412, 458, 459, 471, 472, 474
Hare, Archdeacon, and Landor, 296, 374, 382
Hare, Marcus T., 373
Hargrave, Mr., 57
Harley, Edward, 125
Harlot's Progress, The, 418
Harris, Frank, 23
Hastings, Warren, 133
Haydon, Benjamin Robert, 194
Hayward, Abraham, 79, 330
Hazlitt, William, 54, 132-133, 209, 210, 212, 213, 214, 227-228, 392, 471, 478
Hellenic Idyls, 460-461
Hellenics, The, 386-387, 411, 441-442, 445, 465, 473, 475, 482
Henry IV and Arnold Savage, 198
Herbert, Hon. William, 87
Heroic Idyls, 172, 460-462, 475, 482
Herries and Co., 213
Hertford, Isabella, Lady, 31
Hesse, Prince of, 174
Hessey, J. A., 213
Hicken (Dr. Landor's attorney), 78
High and Low Life in Italy, 217, 219, 280, 299, 304, 472, 482
History of England, Macaulay's, 344
History of the Peninsular War, Napier's, 319
History of the Peninsular War, Southey's, 198
Hofer, Andrew, 264-265
Hogarth, Georgina, 431, 477
Hogarth, William, 219, 330, 347, 348, 418
Hogg, Thomas Jefferson, 228, 471
Holcroft, Thomas, 25, 102
Holyoake, Francis, 32, 35
Holyoake, George Jacob, 429-430, 442-444, 449, 456, 475, 478
Homer, 43, 46, 317, 397
Hood's Magazine, 380
Hook, Theodore, 57, 330
Hooper, Geraldine, 417-419, 420, 425, 429, 447, 475
Hooper, T. C., 418-421, 475
Hopkins, Nicholas, 143, 144, 145, 154
Horace, 397, 451
Horne, Richard Hengist, 370, 478
House of Letters, A, 164, 476
Household Words, 334, 401
Hugh Trevor, 102
Hughes, Miss, 401
Hunt, Holman, 219
Hunt, Leigh, 105, 136, 193, 195-196, 197, 199, 212, 213, 214, 225, 228, 260, 265, 299, 301, 471, 472, 478, 483
Hunt, Thornton, 301
Hurd, Richard, 198
Hurdis, Rev. James, 67
Hutchinson, Thomas, 129, 130
Hutton, Rev. Mr., 266, 307, 309
Hyperion, 77

Iambi, 65, 469, 481
"Ianthe" (Sophia Jane Swifte, later Comtesse de Molandé), 29-30, 80-82, 83, 84-88, 90-92, 95, 99, 100, 115-116, 118, 120, 153, 198, 249-251, 255, 256, 257, 282, 283, 318, 319, 320-321, 377, 400, 405-406, 453, 459, 467, 469, 470, 471, 474
Idler in Italy, The, 233
Idyllia Heroica Decem, 184, 201, 383, 470, 481
Idyllia Nova Quinque, 156, 170, 288, 470, 481
Imaginary Conversations, 10, 24, 37, 42, 57, 102, 110, 138, 183, 191, 197, 198, 199, 200-216, 223, 225, 228, 232, 236, 240-

242, 243, 245, 247, 258, 265, 272, 273, 274, 287, 288, 289, 296, 297, 300, 302, 306, 332, 333, 336, 338, 344, 368, 370, 379, 381, 382, 385, 387, 389, 413, 423, 445, 458, 471, 474, 481, 482
Imaginary Conversations of Greeks and Romans, 349, 410-411, 474, 482
Impious Feast, The, 71
Incognita, 382
Independent Whig, The, 136
Ines de Castro, 114, 115, 155
Inferno, Dante's, 429
Ingratitude, 444
Innes, Dr., 241
Ion, 292, 295, 325, 335
Iphigeneid, vide *Agamemnon*
Isola, Emma, 261, 300
Italics, The, 389, 474

Jackson, S., 84
Jamaica, Bishop of, 434
James, Dr., 12-15, 16, 23, 27, 210
James, G. P. R., 265-266, 272, 276, 289-290, 299, 308, 339, 354, 361, 372-373, 374, 445, 453, 472, 478
James, Henry, 440, 480
Jameson, Anna, 336
Jekyl, Joseph, 57
Jervis, Colonel, 378
Jervis, Thomas, 162, 163
Joan of Arc and Her Judge, 451
Johnson, Dr. Samuel, 49, 50, 52, 53, 265, 274, 331, 382
Johnson and Horne Tooke, 265, 274-275
Johnstone, banker, 308
Jones, of Leethroy, 150, 154, 161, 249
Jones, Gale, 105
Jones, Hugh, 144, 145, 153, 154, 161, 162
Jones, Nancy ("Ione"), xix, 29-30, 33, 35-38, 43, 44, 45, 46, 69, 83, 87, 330, 469
Jones, Sir William, 50, 65, 244
Jonson, Ben, 397
Josephine, Empress, 111
Junius, 55
Justin, 76

Kean, Edmund, 57, 292
Keats, John, 77, 194, 195, 196, 387, 477
Keepsake, The, 372
Kemble, John Philip, 57, 113
Kenyon, John, 251-252, 256, 258, 293, 297, 314, 319, 326, 366, 369, 370, 371, 406, 407, 418, 436
Kett, Rev. Henry, 23, 25
King Carlo-Alberto and the Duchess Belgioioso, 389, 474, 482
Kinglake, A. W., 370, 473
Kirkup, Seymour Stocker, Baron, 192-194, 216, 220, 221, 225, 227, 255, 265, 397, 438, 440, 451, 455, 464, 471
Klapka, General George, 391
Knowles, Sheridan, 301, 336
Koch, Louisa, 414, 417, 482
Kossuth, Louis, 371, 389-390, 392, 443, 474, 482

Lacy, Hugh de, 124
Ladbroke, Mr., 51
La Fontaine, 228
Lamartine, 226-227, 388
Lamartine and Thiers, 226
Lamb, Charles, xviii, 45, 129, 259-262, 263, 264, 267, 272, 289, 292, 300, 301, 472, 478
Lamb, Mary, 259, 260, 265
Lamballe, Princesse de, 81
Lambe, Dr. William, 61, 87, 228
Landor, Arnold Savage (son), xix, xxi, 180, 182, 189, 222, 223, 229-230, 231, 236, 237, 242, 243, 249, 251, 256, 270-271, 281, 282, 284, 285, 286, 303, 304, 305-309, 310, 312-315, 350-351, 358, 359-362, 363, 380, 397-399, 416, 433-435, 438, 444, 451-452, 454, 467, 470, 473
Landor, Rev. Charles Savage (brother), 1, 4, 8, 11, 16, 40, 42, 80, 83, 89, 172, 174, 180, 258, 311, 353, 355, 358, 363, 372, 406, 407, 416, 474
Landor, Mrs. Charles, 371, 407
Landor, Charles Savage (son), xix, xxi, 223-224, 231, 242, 270, 285, 312, 397, 399, 433, 451-452, 454-455, 459-460, 462, 464, 466-467, 471
Landor, Edward Willson (cousin), 216-217, 312-313
Landor, Elizabeth (mother), 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 17, 18, 33, 41, 42, 53, 75, 79, 89, 92, 93-95, 119, 129, 162, 163, 172, 173, 179-180, 182, 185, 189, 222-224, 234, 242, 243, 244, 247-249, 281, 282, 352, 358, 471
Landor, Elizabeth (sister), 2, 3, 6, 31, 32, 42, 58, 70, 73, 91-92, 94, 107, 118-119, 129, 188, 219, 225, 226, 237, 241, 242, 243, 244, 248, 251, 256, 257, 258, 276, 281, 284, 300-301, 314, 319, 350, 352-355, 357, 358, 363, 367, 371, 399, 406, 407, 408-409, 415, 416, 424, 474
Landor, Ellen (niece), *vide* Duke
Landor, Ellen (sister), 2, 3, 42, 54, 63, 94, 129, 190, 211, 218, 223, 224, 225, 227, 235, 236, 238, 241, 244, 245, 247, 248, 249, 251, 256, 257, 258, 281, 282, 284, 300-301, 319, 350, 352

Landor, Henry Eyres (brother), 1, 5, 6, 18, 42, 61, 69, 72, 75, 78, 83, 90, 94, 105, 106, 159, 172, 173, 175, 180, 184, 186, 188, 219, 220, 243, 248, 249, 282, 284, 304, 305, 307, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 339, 347, 348, 352, 355, 356, 358, 360, 366, 397, 398-399, 404, 408, 414, 415-416, 421, 427, 434, 435, 436, 438, 439-440, 450, 452, 454, 458, 459, 464
Landor, Rev. John (uncle), 4, 89
Landor, Julia (wife), 119-121, 122, 128, 130, 149, 150, 153, 162, 163, 168-170, 173-175, 176, 182, 185, 189, 216, 220, 223, 224, 230, 237, 242, 243, 244, 248, 268, 271, 277-286, 303, 304, 305-309, 312-315, 322, 350, 351, 358, 361, 362, 366, 378, 397, 398, 415, 432-436, 438, 452, 467, 470
Landor, Julia Elizabeth Savage (daughter), xix, xxi, 185, 189, 217, 224, 229-230, 231, 237, 242, 243, 251, 256, 285, 286, 303, 304, 305-308, 312-313, 354-355, 362-364, 376, 379, 397-399, 433, 440, 452, 470, 473
Landor, Kitty (niece), 353, 354, 414, 416, 421, 427, 432, 433, 459
Landor, Maria (Arden), 2
Landor, Mary, 2
Landor, Mary Anne (sister), 2, 3, 94, 129
Landor, Rev. Robert Eyres (brother), xviii, 1-2, 4, 5, 10, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 24, 37, 40, 42, 46, 52, 53, 58, 61, 62, 63, 66, 69, 70-72, 78, 82, 83, 88, 89-90, 94, 98, 106-107, 119, 126, 151, 152, 168, 171-176, 178, 179, 184, 186, 187, 188, 242, 243, 259, 279, 280, 304, 335-336, 352, 355-358, 363, 366, 371, 397, 407, 408, 421, 438, 439, 455, 470, 478
Landor, Sophy (niece), 353, 354, 416, 432, 433, 438, 454
Landor, Dr. Walter (father), 1-2, 4, 5, 14, 15, 16-18, 20, 27, 28, 30-31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 40, 41, 42, 49, 51, 52, 61, 65, 66, 79, 83, 88, 89, 219, 223, 284, 469
Landor, Walter, of Rugeley (cousin), 214, 248, 249, 258, 308, 311, 313, 315, 333, 360, 361, 438
Landor, Walter Noble, xix, 476
Landor, Walter Savage (son), xix, xxi, 223, 231, 237, 242, 270, 285, 312, 350-352, 355, 358-359, 361, 362-364, 399, 433, 434, 451-452, 454-455, 459-462, 464, 466-467, 471, 473
Landor's *Defence*, vide *Defence*
Landor's Remarks, Mr., 442, 475, 482
Landor, Mr., Threatened, 420, 475, 482
Landseer, Edwin, 348
Langley, Rev. William, 21-22, 46, 469
Last Days, Letters, and Conversations, Landor's, xix, 478
Last Essays of Elia, 261
Last Fruit Off an Old Tree, The, 114, 129, 196, 408, 411-412, 424, 425, 474, 482
Laternarius, 70, 71
Lawley, Sir Robert, *vide* Wenlock
Lays of Ancient Rome, 344
Leckie, Gould Francis, 197, 225, 271, 309, 471
Ledru-Rollin, A. A., 349
Leeds, of Trinity, 27
Leofric and Godiva, 22
Letter to Emerson, 267, 414, 475, 482
Letter to Mr. Jervis, 162, 481
Letters, Landor's, ed. Wheeler, xix, 354, 460
Letters of a Canadian, 456-457, 475, 482
Letters of a Conservative, 297-298, 302, 311, 322, 329, 339, 340, 354, 411, 423, 472, 481
Letters of an American, 412, 474, 482
Letters of Calvus, 107, 156-158, 339, 470, 481
Letters to Burdett, 105, 481
Letters to Lord Liverpool, 156-158, 481
Letters to Riquelme, 101-102, 105, 189, 470, 481
Lewis, John, 138
Lind, Jenny, 346
Linton, W. J., 462
Lippi, Filippo, 219
Literary Hours, 265, 300
Liverpool, 2nd Earl of, 156, 206
Livy, 344
Llanbedr, Statement of Occurrences at, 406, 482
Locke, 140
Lockhart, John Gibson, 107, 272, 482
London Journal, 260, 265
London Magazine, 203, 204, 209, 292, 471
London Review, 449, 475
London Weekly Review, 228
Longmans, publishers, 113, 114, 184, 189, 200, 201, 215, 356, 389
Louis Napoleon, Prince, *vide* Napoleon III
Lowell, James Russell, xix, 219, 366, 478
Lucullus and Caesar, 333
Luria, 369
Luxembourg, Duc de, 250

Lyndhurst, Lord, 343
Lynn Linton, Mrs. (Eliza Lynn), 299, 334, 367, 397, 400-403, 404-405, 410, 413, 414, 416-417, 420, 424, 431-432, 444, 446, 447, 451, 455, 462, 473, 478, 479
Lyrical Ballads, 64
Lyttelton, 1st Lord, 198
Lyttelton, Dorothy Elizabeth, xix, 31-36, 38, 40, 41, 46, 467, 469
Lytton, 1st Earl of ("Owen Meredith"), 87, 412
Lytton, 1st Lord, *vide* Bulwer

Macaulay, Lord, 343-344
MacCarthy, Mr., 284-285, 305-306
Macdonell, Mrs., 397
Machiavelli, 140
Mackenzie, Miss, of Seaforth, 276, 286
Mackintosh, Sir James, 57, 188
Maclise, Daniel, 348
Macready, William Charles, 292-293, 301, 323, 335, 336, 425, 479
Madden, R. R., 40, 476
Madison, James, 132, 133, 134, 135
Maginn, William, 255, 392
Malibran, Maria, 346
Manners-Sutton, *vide* Canterbury
Marie-Louise, Empress, 111
Mark, St., 117
Marmion, 333
Marryat, Captain Frederick, 272
Martial, 426
Martin, publisher, 202
Martineau, Harriet, 272
Marvel and Parker, 242, 306
Mary and Philip, 211
Masaccio, 219
Massy, Lord, 415
Matthew, St., 117
Matthews, Samuel, 166
Maurice, F. D., 373
Mawman, Joseph, publisher, 200, 202
Medici, Palazzo, 191, 216, 471
Medici family, the, 191, 216, 217, 219
Melbourne, Lord, 342, 343
Melville, Henry Dundas, Viscount, 108
Memoirs of Female Sovereigns, 336
Meredith, Owen, *vide* Lytton
Meyler, W., 84, 102
Meyrick, General George, 182, 363
Meyrick, Sir Samuel, 363
Michel-Angelo, 220, 295
Middleton, painter, 217, 220, 242, 243
Middleton and Magliabechi, 205, 207, 210, 211
Mignet, 349
Mill, John Stuart, 338
Milnes, Richard Monckton, Lord Houghton, 135, 219, 259, 265, 267-270, 277, 287, 292, 298, 300, 327-328, 351, 365, 366, 382, 395, 443, 464, 465, 472, 478, 479
Milton, 46, 47, 67, 262, 387, 397, 429, 445
Milton versus Southey and Landor, 384
Mina, General, 380
Minchin, H. C., xix, 478
Mrs. Leicester's School, 259-260
Mitford, Rev. John, 384
Mitford, Mary Russell, 293, 371
Mocatta, Isaac, 67-68, 423
Molandé, Comte Lepelletier de, 81
Molandé, Comtesse de, *vide* "Ianthe"
Montagu, Lady Mary Wortley, 287
Monthly Repository, 299, 472, 483
Monthly Review, 67, 88
Moore, Mr., 159
Moore, George, 238, 468
Moore, Sir John, 102
Moore, Thomas, 292, 394, 479
Moral Epistle to Earl Stanhope, 39, 481
Morgan, Sydney, Lady, 211
Morgan, Captain Thomas, 180
Morning Chronicle, 55, 105, 198, 369, 473
Morning Post, 55, 156
Morosini, Cavaliere, 186
Mother, The, 397-398
Mother's Tale, A, 300
Mountjoy, Lord, *vide* Blessington
Moxon, Edward, 254, 261, 380, 383, 384, 386, 410, 411
Mulgrave, Earl of, *vide* Normanby
Murat, 73
Murchison, Sir Roderick, 172
Mureta, J. S. de, 155, 288
Murray, John, 114, 131-134, 135, 479

Napier, Sir Charles James, 320, 328, 342, 353
Napier, Nora, 319, 320
Napier, Sir William, 319-320, 352, 353, 369, 373, 374, 381-382, 393, 404, 406, 412, 441-442, 443, 445, 472, 474, 475
Napoleon Buonaparte, xx, 68, 72-74, 75, 76, 78, 99, 100, 103, 105, 107, 111, 136, 152, 156-158, 170, 171, 175, 183, 191, 193, 211, 338, 344, 345, 381, 447, 466
Napoleon III, 74, 344-345, 390, 391, 437-438, 444, 448-449, 473
Nash, Beau, 378
National Magazine, 416

"Neaera," 69, 83
Nelson, 342
New Monthly Magazine, 330
New Spirit of the Age, The, 370
Newby, T. C., 455-456, 457, 461
Newcomes, The, 84
Newton, Isaac, 210
Nichol, James, 425
Nicholas I, Czar, 390-391
Nicholas and Nesselrode, 474
Nicholas Nickleby, 325
"Nimrod," *vide* Apperley
Noble, Walter, 1
Norbury, 1st Earl of, 81
Norma, La, 346
Normanby, 1st Marquis of, 231, 232, 245, 251, 265, 341, 343, 398, 434
North, Christopher, *vide* Wilson
North, Lord, 372
Northampton, 2nd Marquis of, 300, 343-344
Nott, John, 65
Nouvelle Héloïse, La, 260
Nugent, Lord, 371

O'Connell, Daniel, 340
Ode to Sicily, 389
Offerings to Buonaparte, 157
O'Hara, Mr., 99
Oliver Twist, 325
Orestes Maddened, 300, 337
Original Letters of Sir John Falstaff, 261, 272
Orsini, Felice, 345, 391, 450
Orthographic Mutineers, 275, 384
Othello, 381
Otho of Bavaria, 341
Our Mutual Friend, 423
Ovid, 196, 275, 288, 451
Oxford, Landor at, 22-28, 70, 71, 76, 82, 469
Oxford Review, 88

Paine, Tom, 57, 136
Pallavicini, Marchese, 183, 197
Palmerston, Lord, 192, 340, 389, 392-393
Paracelsus, 336, 337, 369
Parachinetti, 42
Paradise Lost, 37, 46, 429
Parigi, 269
Parkhurst, Fleetwood, 19-20, 372
Parr, Dr. Samuel, 49-55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 64, 65, 71, 77, 93, 96, 98, 106, 107, 119-120, 131, 132, 153, 170, 178, 187, 200, 201, 224-225, 231, 241, 267, 291, 338, 374, 471, 479
Parry, Lewis, 144, 145
Partridge, Eric, 2, 4, 5, 71, 90, 478
Pasta, Giuditta, 346
Patmore, Coventry, 394, 479
Paul, St., 117
Paulus, Heinrich, 311
Paynter, Fred, 323-324
Paynter, Rose, *vide* Graves-Sawle
Paynter, Mrs. Sophia, 44, 45, 276, 319, 320, 323, 355, 361, 376, 378, 459, 472
Paynter, Sophy, 319, 320, 323
Peel, Sir Robert, 327, 328, 342, 343
Pelham, 271
Pembroke, 12th Earl of, 343
Pendennis, 84, 156, 240
Pentameron and Pentalogia, The, 286, 298, 304, 331, 334, 356, 472, 481
Perceval, Spencer, 134, 136, 371
Pergami, Bartolomo, 186
Pericles and Aspasia, 79, 287-291, 297, 298, 302, 304, 305, 310, 311, 325, 332, 339, 356, 357, 472, 481
Perry, James, 55, 105
Perugino, 220, 221
Peruzzi di Medici, Marchesa, *vide* Story
Peter, St., 448
Peter Leopold and President Du Paty, 191
Peterborough, Earl of, 133
Petrarch, 295
Philological Museum, The, 242
Phocaeans, From the, 76-77
Pickering, William, 457
Pickwick Papers, 325
Pindar, 43, 46
Pio Nono and Antonelli, 410
Pitt, William, 39, 55, 61, 78, 206, 226, 291, 338
Pitt and Canning, 206-207
Pius VII, Pope, 183
Pius IX, Pope, 345, 390, 410, 411, 445, 448
Poche Osservazioni, 188-189, 201, 449, 471, 481
Poemata et Inscriptiones, 185, 383-384, 386, 473, 482
Poems from the Arabic and Persian, 65, 424, 469, 481
Poems of 1831 (*Gebir, Count Julian, and Other Poems*), 115, 254-255, 283, 332, 471, 472, 481
Poems of W. S. Landor, The, 30-32, 33, 38, 39, 469, 481
Poetry by the Author of Gebir, 67, 76, 469, 481
Polyolbion, 10

Pomero, xvii, 269, 330, 376-377, 413-414, 418, 447-448, 473, 474
Pope, Alexander, 22, 26, 43, 46, 108, 337
Popery: British and Foreign, 411, 474, 482
Porson, Richard, 49, 202, 208
Postscript to Gebir, 38, 67, 68, 423
Poussin, Nicolas, 348
Powell, David, 144, 145
Powell, General, 17, 18, 40
Powell, Hugh, 125, 138, 153, 161, 162, 384
Prelude, The, 296
Prew, Squire, 258
Price, Henry, 128, 154, 159-160
Price, John, 137, 138, 142, 145, 147, 153, 154, 160
Pride and Prejudice, 32
Procter, Bryan Waller ("Barry Cornwall"), 301, 337, 479
Progress of Romance, The, 46
Prometheus Bound, 288
Prosser, William, 144, 145
Puntomichino and Talcranagh, 211, 217, 226, 244
Pybus, Dr., 67

Quarterly Review, 37, 105, 132, 208, 209, 334, 474, 479, 482
Quillinan, Edward, 297

Rachel, Elisa, 350
Radcliffe, Anne, 46
Raffael, *vide* Raphael
Raleigh, 22
Raphael, 219, 220, 221, 295, 348, 374
Ravenshaw, Mr., 314
Reade, Charles, 3, 340
Reade, John Edmund, 323, 379
Realities, 402
Récamier, Madame, 75, 349
Reeve, Clara, 46, 77
Reeve, Henry, 331-332, 479
Regent, The, 61
Reynell and Weight, 389
Richards, Rev. George, 23, 25, 67
Richardson, Samuel, 260, 295
Richelieu, Duc de, 238
Richelieu, Sir Firebrace Cotes, etc., 211, 238
Rickman, John, 105
Ridgway, publisher, 202
Rintoul, R. S., 392
Riquelme, General Francisco, 101
Rivingtons, 65, 67
Robbins, Francis, 159, 305, 311
Robinson, Henry Crabb, 65, 101, 221, 252-254, 256, 257, 259-263, 264, 267, 270, 289, 292, 293, 295-297, 298, 313, 326, 361, 472, 479
Roche, J. W., 414, 418, 419, 430
Rochester, Lord, 197
Roderick, 98, 109
Rodneys, the, of Llanvihangel, 125
Roebuck, J. A., 392
Rogers, Samuel, 181, 261, 292, 396
Romagnoli, Mrs. (Wilson), 440, 450, 466
Romilly, Sir Samuel, 18
Rose, George, 132, 134
Rosenhagen, Anthony, 20, 358, 366, 368, 371-372, 378, 407, 408
Rossetti, D. G., 219
Rossini, 347
Rough, Serjeant James, 61-63, 64, 68, 104, 201, 374
Rousseau, 260, 295
Rubens, 347
Rubinstein, Anton, 346
Rugby, Landor at, xix, xx, 7, 8-15, 18, 24, 27, 31, 178, 469
Russell, Sir Henry, 45
Russell, Lord John, 217, 244, 392, 393

Saintsbury, George, 4
Salvator Rosa, 455
Sandford, William, 265, 305, 307, 308, 314, 391, 434, 451, 454, 462
Sandt and Kotzebue, 379
Satire on Satirists, A, 295-297, 298, 299, 310, 334, 369, 423, 472, 481
Saunders and Otley, 274, 289, 297, 298, 305, 310, 311, 332, 333, 336, 355
Savage, Sir Arnold, 182, 198
Savage, Elizabeth (Landor's mother), *vide* Landor
Savage family, the, 1-2, 41
Savonarola, 449, 475, 482
Sawle, *vide* Graves-Sawle
Saye and Sele, 16th Lord, 460
Sayers, Dr. Frank, 98
Scarlett, James, *vide* Abinger
Scenes for the Study, vide *Antony and Octavius*
Schaffgotsch, Countess von, 285
Schlegel, A. W. von, 264, 445, 472
Schodel, Madame, 346
Scott, Sir Walter, 59, 96, 181, 262, 266, 291, 292, 373
Select Icelandic Poetry, 87
Selwyn, George, 57
Seward, Anna, 59-60, 121
Seymour, Sir George Hamilton, 265

Shakespeare, 2, 22, 47, 58, 109, 195, 199, 241, 261, 262, 272-273, 322, 334, 381, 397, 445, 468
Shakespeare, Citation and Examination of William, vide *Citation*
Shakespeare's Autobiographical Poems, 195, 322, 397
Shaw, Bernard, 390
Shelley, Harriet, 196
Shelley, Percy Bysshe, 109, 136, 196, 228, 387, 479
Sheridan, R. B., 55
Shippen, William, 39
Shuckburgh, Sophia, 19, 106
Siddons, Sarah, 57, 61
Simonidea, 36, 84-88, 89, 116, 231, 255, 469, 481
Simpkin and Marshall, 205
Sironi, Signor, 183, 187
Sketches of Statesmen, 340
Slack, Mr., 419, 420
Slatter and Munday, 76, 77, 106, 156, 162, 176
Sleath, Dr., 11, 23
Smith, Hamilton, 363-364
Smith, Robert (Bobus), 156
Smith, Sydney, 52
Sodre, Luisina de, 377, 400
Sodre, Maria de, 250, 400
Somers, John, Lord, 200
Somerset, Lord Arthur, 140
Somnambula, La, 346
Sophocles, 46, 465
Sordello, 337
Soul's Tragedy, A, 369
Southerne, Thomas, 326
Southey, Rev. Cuthbert, 129, 316, 479
Southey, Robert, 7, 8, 10, 11, 24-26, 54, 55, 56, 62, 64, 65, 76, 83, 84, 93, 95-99, 100, 101, 102, 104, 105, 106, 108, 109, 110, 112, 113, 114, 116-118, 119, 120, 126, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132-135, 136, 141, 151, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 162, 164, 168, 170, 171, 177, 178, 181, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 196, 197, 198, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 214, 215, 217-218, 221, 223, 224, 240, 241, 244, 246, 251, 252, 253, 256, 257-259, 262, 274, 277, 286, 287, 289, 294, 295-297, 299, 316, 317, 318, 319, 321, 322, 326-328, 330, 334, 338, 343, 347, 356, 374, 384, 385, 445, 469, 472, 473, 479
Southey and Porson, 202, 204, 208, 209, 227, 296-297, 379, 471
Spectator, The, 392
Spedding, James, 379
Spencer, attorney, 144
Spenser, 22
Spirit of the Age, The, 132, 227
Sponsalia Polyxenae, 184, 470, 481
Stabat Mater, 347
Stanfield, Clarkson, 348
Stanhope, 3rd Earl, 39
Statesman, The, 136
Sterling, John, 368
Stopford, Colonel Edward, 223, 314
Stopford, Laura, 168, 170, 182, 223, 282, 314, 361
Stopford, Teresita, 361
Story, Edith (Marchesa Peruzzi di Medici), 436-440, 446, 478
Story, William Wetmore, 436-440, 446, 447, 461, 480
Story, Mrs. W. W., 237, 239, 437-440, 446, 447, 448
Stowe, Mrs. Harriet Beecher, 445
Strafford, 108
Strafford, 335, 337
Street, Peter, 55, 78
Stuart, Daniel, 55, 78
Stuart, Lord Dudley, 390, 409
Sumner, Dr. Robert, 50
Super, R. H., xix, 37, 478
Sussex, Duke of, 257
Swansea, Landor at, 37, 38, 43-46, 48, 69, 77, 154, 169, 276, 387, 469, 470
Sweepings from Under the Study Table, 456, 458, 460
Swift, Jonathan, 80, 164, 200
Swift, Sophia Jane, *vide* "Ianthe"
Swifte, Godwin, 80, 86, 116
Swifte, William Richard, 80, 81, 85, 90, 251, 480
Swinburne, Algernon Charles, 443, 464-466, 475, 478, 480
Symington, J. A., 476

Tait's Magazine, 275, 384
Talfourd, T. N., 292-293, 301, 335
Tallien, Thérèse, 72, 75, 350
Talma, F. J., 57, 58
Tasso and Cornelia, 370, 379
Tatham, Rev. E. H. R., xix, 479
Taunton, W. E., 162, 164, 404
Taylor, Sir Henry, 347
Taylor, John (of Taylor and Hessey), 203-207, 209, 210, 211-215, 225, 240, 242, 423, 457, 471, 480
Taylor, Dr. John, 51
Taylor, William, of Norwich, 64
Taylor and Hessey, 203, 213
Teleki, Count, 391

Temple, Sir William, 200
Tenby, Landor at, 29-30, 35-40, 56
Tennyson, Alfred, Lord, 109, 379, 387, 480
Tennyson, Frederic, 396
Terry Hogan, 298, 472, 481
Thackeray, W. M., xix, 84, 156, 240, 272, 292, 316, 334, 338
Thalaba, 64, 96, 98
Thanksgiving Ode, 171
Thelwall, John, 25
Theocritus, 357, 379
Thiers, 349
Thirlwall, Bishop, 384
Thomas, John, 144, 145, 146, 154, 160
Thuillier, Jean Pierre, 169
Thuillier, Mrs. J. P., 169, 351, 363
Thuillier, Julia, *vide* Landor
Thuillier, Laura, *vide* Stopford
Thuillier, Rose, 309, 351
Tiberius and Vipsania, 215
Tibullus, 428
Tickell, Major, 60
Times, The, 101, 156, 186, 187, 188, 391, 393, 430, 444, 457, 461, 475
Titian, 219, 220, 347, 465
Tombes, of Trodrumon, 141-142, 145, 147, 153
Tonson, William, Lord Riversdale, 108
Tooke, John Horne, 25, 265, 274
Trafford, Jane, Lady, 51
Trelawny, E. J., 194, 266
Tribute, The, 300
Trollope, Anthony, 445, 446, 455
Trollope, Theodosia, *vide* Garrow
Trollope, Thomas Adolphus, 319, 349, 402, 403, 446, 455, 467, 480
Tully, *vide* Cicero
Twisleton, Hon. Edward, 460, 461, 463, 475
Tyrannicide, 391-392, 474, 482

Valpy, A. J., 156, 202, 470
Vandyck, 347
Vansittart, Nicholas, 108
Venour, Jack, 106
Vere, Aubrey de, 394
Veronese, Paolo, 347
Victor Emmanuel II, King, 457
Victoria, Queen, 391, 411
Vidocq, E. F., 349
Vindicae Ecclesiae Anglicanae, 244
Virgil, 275, 288, 451
Virgilius and Horatius, 451
Vision of Judgment, The, 197, 211
Voltaire, 295
Vyner, Captain, 200, 385, 458

Wade, Rev. Dr. A. S., 241
Walker, Admiral, 460
Walker, Dr. Arthur de Noe, 354, 435, 444, 446, 449, 451, 455-458, 460, 461, 462
Wallace, painter, 242, 280
Walpole, Horace, 287
Ward, 9th Lord, *vide* Dudley
Warton, Joseph and Thomas, 22, 38
Warwick, 2nd Earl of, 51, 61
Warwick, 4th Earl of, 347
Washington and Franklin, 226
Waverley, 373
Welby, T. Earle, 479, 482
Wellington, 1st Duke of, 101, 133, 135, 320
Wells, Mrs., 119
Wells, H. G., 390
Wenlock, Lord (formerly Sir Robert Lawley), 51, 244, 245, 256, 257, 265, 283-285
Wentworth, Sir Charles, 63
Wertheimer, J., and Co., 298
Wertherism, 48
West, Frederick Richard, 407
West, Mrs. F. R., 407, 443, 454, 462
Westmoreland Gazette, 385
Wheeler, Stephen, xix, 84, 116, 135, 164, 354, 460, 479, 483
Whewell, William, 384
White, James, 261
Wilberforce, William, 56
Wilde, Oscar, 23, 465
Wilkes, John, 62
Williams, Henry, 159
Willis, Nathaniel Parker, 272-273, 306, 333, 380, 472
Willoughby, 17th Lord, of Parham, 39
Wilson, Mrs., *vide* Romagnoli
Wilson, Harriette, 139
Wilson, John (Christopher North), 99, 107, 209, 294
Wilson, Richard, 347
Wilson, Sir Robert, 380
Winthrop, R. C., 446
Wise, T. J., xix, 457, 476, 479
Wiseman, Cardinal, 411, 474
Wolseley, Sir Charles, 185-187
Wood, Colonel Sir Mark, 125, 126, 127, 144, 145, 146
Wordsworth, William, xx, 48, 93, 97, 98, 99, 102, 171, 181, 184-185, 196, 197, 201, 202, 204, 207, 208, 209, 210, 218, 251,

253, 256, 257-259, 262, 289, 293-297, 298, 313, 327, 328, 370, 385, 387, 472, 480
Wordsworth, Mrs., 129
Worsley, P., 264
Wright, Richard and Mary, 2

Yescombe, Mrs. Mary Jane, 414-415, 417-420, 423-427, 429-430, 434, 435, 442, 443, 447, 463, 467, 475, 476, 482
Yescombe, Rev. Morris, 414, 415, 418, 420, 425, 426, 427, 429, 435, 442, 443, 467
Yescombe, W. S. Landor and the Hon. Mrs., 417, 423, 475, 482